



**A litle**  
**treatyse called the**  
**Image of Idlenesse,**  
**conteynyng certeyne**  
**matters moued be-**  
**twene Walter Wed-**  
**locke and Baldin**  
**Bachelier. Traſla-**  
**ted out of the**  
**Tropane of**  
**Corinthe**  
**ſounge into Engliſh,**  
**by Olyuer Oldwan-**  
**ſon, and dedicated**  
**to the Lady**  
**Ruſſ.**



6 Sh  
2



The Table of this  
present booke.

**T**he p[re]face of the translatour. Capit. i.  
The fyrst part of a certeyne Epistle sent  
by Baldwyn Bachelor to Walter Wed-  
locke, wherein doth apcare the grounde that  
caused the settinge forth of this treatise.  
Capitulo. ii.

**C** Baldwyn Bachelor beinge suter to a cer-  
teyne Gentyllwoman for maryage, wyrteth  
to a frende of hers for to haue his helpe and  
furtheraunce in the matter. Capit. iiii.

**¶** Wheras Baldwin had bin suter to a cer-  
teyne Gentyllwoman for maryage, and was  
in good hope to obteyne, he receaued know-  
ledge to the contrary by letter from a gen-  
tleman that hadde byn partely a meanes for  
hym, and therupon wrote backe to the said  
Gentleman as foloweth. Capit. v.

**C** Here Baldwyn wyrteth to the Gentle-  
woman mencioned in the last letter. Ca. vi.

**C** Where as a certeyne Gentlewoman bare  
in hande that she was determyned neuer to  
marry, and was neuerthelesse lykely to be  
much sued vnto for maryage, here Baldwyn  
informeth her by his letter vnder what sort  
she were beste to vse and gyue ouer her su-  
ters. Capitulo. vi.

**C** Here Baldwyn wyrteth to a certeyne gen-  
tlewoman  
A. ii.

### The Table.

gentleman that was daungerous to be sene  
or spoken withal by such as came to sue vn  
to her for marriage. Capi. vii.

¶ Here Baldwyn wytteth to a certeyne  
Gentleman at whose handes he had his  
disdeynfully refused vppon treatye of mar-  
riage. Capitulo. viii.

¶ Here Baldwyn wytyng to a certeyne gen-  
tleman his frende, amonge other thynges  
bewayleth hym selfe of his euyl speede in  
wooyng and treatye of marriage. Capi. ix.

¶ Where as Baldwyn serued in Barrylon  
and had compounded with a certeyne gen-  
tleman, his frende, to repayre thither at  
all tymes of daunger, the same being so  
streghthed in a tyme of commotion, that he  
was forced for his safegard to take another  
howlde, where as were many Gentlewo-  
men, whiche furnytur the other greatly  
wanted. Here Baldwyn maketh hym request  
to haue some fructioun of that commoditie.

Capitulo. x.

¶ The aunswere made to the sayde letter.  
Capitulo. xi.

¶ Here Baldwyn repliyeth to the foresayde  
answere, and percuynge his continual euyl  
speede, doth determyne to gyue ouer all such  
kynde of lutes. Capi. xii.

¶ The seconde parte of the Eppyle sent by  
Baldwyn

**The Table.**

**Bawdyn Bachelor to Walter Wedlocke.**

**Capitulo. iiii.**

**C** Here Bawdyn to proue that women are neuer so much addyct or bent to theyr owne wyll and oppynyon, but that by wysedome and good pollycy they may easely be broken therof, sheweth a lyuely example of late experience.

**Capi. iiii.**

**C** The thyrde and last parte of the Epysle sent by Bawdyn Bachelor to Walter Wedlocke.

**Capitulo. v.**

**C** Here endeth the Table.

¶ The p̄face of the transla:  
tion. Capitulo primo.

¶ To the ryght honorable and his especiall  
good Lady, the lady Aust of Walsforde,  
Olyuer Oldwanton, your Ladyships  
bondeman, wytheth a ioyfull  
lyfe and contynuall  
felicitie.



Allynge to mynde the oppi:  
nion of Aristippus, a cer:  
teyne Philosopher of the  
picuriens secte, who by pro:  
founde argumentes and  
sundry authorities bled to  
maynteyne, that it was  
lawefull for man and woman at vacante  
tymes to exercise them selues with kyssinge  
and imbrasyng (together with the suites  
and cerymonies thercunto belongynge) ra:  
ther then to lye styll and be idle. The same  
my ioly good Lady hath caused me so great:  
ly to detest the wicked vice of Idlenes, that  
in eschewynge therof I haue had sundry de:  
uyles, howe I myght most conueniently be  
occupied, and thereupon fyndynge my selfe  
moze apte then able, for the exercise afore:  
sayde. And mozeouer aswell ignoraunte in  
enery crafte and facultie of bodely labour as  
destitute

### The preface.

Destitute both of lernynge and knowledge,  
wherby to inuente oz set forth any worthy  
matter of newe. I determined at length be-  
cause I haue vnderstandynge in sundrye  
tongues, to take vpon me the translation of  
some worke into Englyshe, and for that pur-  
pose, perusing a numbze of bookes, I chaun-  
ced to fynde a lytle queare inticeled, the I-  
mage of Idlenesse, wyrtten many yeres past  
in the Troiane oz Cozynthe speache, beinge  
the mother tounge of this noble Realme,  
then called Bryttayne, which made me the  
more wyllynge to take the same in hande,  
thynkynge that it myght drawe ageyne to  
memozy the valyaunt people of Troy, wher-  
of for my parte (be it spoken without ad-  
uaunte) I am one of the worthy offsprynge.  
But then came to my remembraunce the wo-  
des of Plato, who sayth, that man lyueth  
not chiefly for hym selfe, but rather for his  
contrey, meanyng that we shulde not apply  
our trauel oz study to our priuate plesure oz  
commoditie: but rather to the aduancement  
of our common wealth: which this purpose  
semed not to concerne, and therfore myght  
chaunce by some mens oppynion ought not to  
be traueyled on. yet neuerthelesse lyke as  
commonly most men be not sone perswaded  
to gyue ouer the thinge that they are affecti-

### The p̄face.

bnated vnto, vppon any surmyse or report,  
that the doyng therof shulde stande ageynst  
the rule of good order: But rather to iustif-  
ie theyr cause, wyl serche for some colour-  
able argument to proue that the same maye  
stande within the compase of order. Euen  
so I beinge bent to this translation, (with  
the helpe of my wyrtes which in this case fa-  
uoured my wil) haue vnder such sort wrested  
common reason, that in mine opinion (being  
inoughe as I suppose for the discharge of  
myne owne conscience) the doyng thereof  
may well inough stande with the p̄cept of  
Plato. If not indirectly, yet at the leaste  
way by a meanes which I proue as thus.  
To be a student of the lawes, a councellour  
or a minister in the common welth is well a-  
lowed with Plato, and then to encourage or  
assist such person in his studie or ministrati-  
on, must nedes be of lyke effecte. And that  
in my mynde shalbe accomplished in this  
worke. For it is apparant vnto vs, that se-  
rious and sadde studie which perceynerh to  
the goneruance and ministration in a com-  
mon wealth is so contrary to most mens na-  
ture, that if the mynde be not recreated with  
some pleasaunt matter, the wyrtes wyl some  
appalle, and the lynely spirites waxe feble  
or dull, And therefore it semeth (that as it  
is



### The p[re]face.

is necessarie) to haue students counsellors  
and ministers in a common wealth. Euen as  
necessarie it is that some men shulde trauell  
to set forth such matter as may reuue theyr  
spirites, beyng mortified by continuall  
graue studie, which otherwyle as accloyed  
and werpe, shulde of force be diuened by vn:  
aptnes, to cease in theyr study or ministrati:  
on, and surely Madame, the iniquitie of  
ryme is nowe suche: that the verie graueste  
and moste wyle sorte of men (yea and euen  
they which haue ministrati on in the common  
wealth) wyl sometyme soonest laughe and  
reioyce to here and rede euill of women: yet  
not as though beinge euill matched theym  
selues, they shulde seme gladd to perceaue  
other men in lyke case, as yf the euill were  
as common as women are great in numbre,  
or that they thynke that they maye by rea:  
dyng of bookes moze safely reprove theyr  
wiues fautes then by expresse wordes. But  
rather cometh as a certeyne plage of ligh:  
nes or franzie by thoperati on of some per:  
uers planet, or euill humoure that causeth  
them indiscretly to condemne them selues,  
by defamyng theyr moste naturall and best  
knowne parente. Lyke as yf the Terrell  
wolde saye that his Serper or Dame were a  
Buttocke or Wyte, which argueth him selfe  
wiser

### The preface.

neuer likely to prone good hauke : And euen  
so it is of these madde men that delyght to  
speake and here euill of women. Howebeit  
nowe very shortly, when by the beneuolence  
of the bodyes aboue, there shal no more such  
occasions be mynistred. I doubte not but  
that men wyl amende their misrepertes and  
gyue ouer such vnsemely delectations. But  
yet in the meane season it shalbe necessarye  
to serue the tyme. And therfore the matter  
of this translation beinge interlased with  
certeyne surmised faultes agaynst women,  
semeth to be as an ayde to the ministers in a  
common wealch, to refreshe with all theyr  
wyttes, beinge as I sayde before, appalled  
with graue studye. So that wherreas suche  
ministers by theyr study and trauell do serue  
the common wealch indirectly : Euen so by  
this worke, which tenderth to mainteine and  
continwe theyr wyttes apte for studye and  
ministracion. We thinketh I serue the com-  
mon wealch by a meanes, so that my tra-  
uyle herein maye well inoughe stande with  
the precepte of Plato. And that thereby at  
the leasse way I shall deserue as much com-  
mendation, as the Smyth which maketh a  
wyell to tyme thinstrument : Who although  
he be ignorant in musicke, is yet worthy of  
some thanks for tharmony, by reason that  
and

The p̄face.

and yf his traueyle had not bin, the stringes  
coulede not haue binne brought to agree in  
tune, and then had there byn no melody at  
al. But alas, a lamentable case to remember  
howe the folly and malyce of man is encrea:  
sed, syth the dayes of Saynt John the E:  
uangelist, who for his recreation after longe  
prayers (as these discrete old wyues beate in  
hande) vled to refreshe hym selfe in playing  
with his byrde. And lykewylse holy Saynt  
Anthony in teachynge his lyttle Wygge to  
tumble and vaulte, and dyd not delyght to  
here oz vnderstande of womens faultes oz  
doublenes, as men do nowe a dayes, which  
alteration by thoppinion of some doctours,  
commeth by thinfluence of some disordered  
planet. As in deede Venus of late to ad:  
uaunce her selfe hastened her ordinarie course,  
thinkynge to make her ascendaunte aboue  
the heade of Iupiter, but by a mischaunce  
she stumbled on Scorpio, and vnder suche  
sorte was tangled, that not onely she fayled  
theaduantage of her pretended purpose, but  
moreouer lost two degrees, and halfe of her  
possessed preemynence, the resolusyon  
wherof semeth to be a great part of the cause  
that maketh many women nowe adayes to  
straye out of order, and minister much occa:  
sion of euill repozte, as couetyng to be ac:  
counted

### The p̄face.

coumpted of hygher estate and abilitie then  
in dede they are, or in makynge they be-  
sie and comelynesse seme moze then it is, to  
garnyshe them selues with moze sumptuous  
apparell and costely Jewels then dothe ap-  
perceyne. For the meynテナunce whercof,  
they abuse that parte of theyr bodies wherc  
as the signe of Scorpio dothe commonly  
raigne, and by such meanes for a tyme ser-  
ueth well theyr purpose, and doth increase  
theyr preferment and estimation. Howebeit  
at length epyther by smellynge or suspicion,  
they fall into defame and obleyny of the peo-  
ple, and be lesse esteemed or set by then when  
they fyrst began. But what soeuer the cause  
of suche alteration be. Sythen I perceaue  
that men are nowe so peruerly bent to re-  
poyt and here euyl of women, yet for the re-  
uerence and zeale that I beare vnto all wo-  
men, I haue thought best, bicause they may  
be the redier with theyr answer or excuse,  
if any of theym shall happen to be charged  
with any of the faultes or euyl properties  
mencioned in this booke. For to make them  
fyrst priue thereunto, by directynge of this  
my simple worke vnto your Ladyshyppe, be-  
ing of all honozable women in these dayes  
(none discommended) aswell for singuler  
wyrt and good conueyghaunce, as for great  
pollycie

### The pꛛeface.

pollicie and longe experience compted most notable, not doubtinge but that all women by your Ladyshippes good aduise and instruction, wyll be well able to defende oꛛ excuse them selues, what so euer shalbe layde to theyꝝ charge, which chiefly hath holden me to byngge this matter into our bulgar speche, accomptyngge moze honour for them to haue it come in question and be well answered, then by scylence to let it alway remayne in suspicion oꛛ doubtfull. In the furtheraunce wherof yf it may lye in me ether by my wordes oꛛ weapon, to do them any seruice oꛛ pleasure: be theyꝝ cause righte oꛛ wronge, I am and shalbe both theyꝝ advocate and champion tyll my lyues ende.

For doubtesse Madame, I hadde rather a thousande men shulde peryshe by the felonyng of theyꝝ faulces (yf any such were) then that I wolde defame oꛛ condempne the very simplest woman of your Ladyshippes trayne, by confessyngge of ought that might make a geynste her. And for my traueyle and good wyll in this behalfe do requyre nothyng els at your Ladyshippes handes, but only that after this transpꛛoxy lyfe, when your good Ladyshyppe for your woorthy workes in earth, shalbe glorified in the celestial throne of the goddesse Venus, that I may be restored

**The p[re]face.**

red againe to youth, and made page of your  
Ladyschypes Chamber, & that in the meane  
tyme it may please your Ladyschippe notwith  
standynge the debilitie of my body, yet for  
the myghtynesse of my mynde and skylfull  
practyse, to admytte me Captayne generall  
of your bande, which I doubt not, what by  
mine owne pollicies, and what by the dili  
gence and secrete wyftes of mine expert Be  
raultes, and circumspecte espialles so ad  
uysedly to leade and gouerne, as they shall  
escape all reproche and daunger of theyr bo  
dies. And as for the safegarde of theyr  
soules, bicause it concerneth not the charge  
of that office, I wyl referre the same to frier  
Flossierar, your Ladyschypes Penitence,  
who for a small portion of the spoyle  
(as some folke here in hande) wyl  
take theyr whole peryll on hym  
selfe, as best knowethe the  
blacke Prouinciall, who  
longe preserue your good  
Ladyschyppe,  
and prosper your procea  
dynges for euer  
and euer  
Amen,



The Image of Idlenesse.

**T**he fyfte parte of a certeyne Epistle  
sent by Baldwyn Bachelor to Walter  
Wedlocke, wherin doth appeare  
the grounde that caused the  
settyng forthe of this  
Treatyse. Capi:  
tulo, ii.



**G**odman Wedlocke my happy  
commendations layde apart,  
wheras I perceave by the re-  
port of Thomas Talker your  
Secretary that ye saye it is a  
shame for me to be so longe  
tyme unmarried, affirmynge that I despyse  
and eschewe maryage, as a carefull and un-  
quiete lyfe, beinge good for nothynge els  
but onely to brynge sinfull people, that can  
patiently bere it to heauen by the penance  
therof, as the very selfe purgatory that ma-  
ny lerned men haue so longe tyme contended  
vpon. Doubtlesse Walter I do marueyle  
muche what hath moued you to charge me  
with so great an iniquitie, as that I shulde  
dispraise the blessed Sacrament of matrimo-  
nye, being instituted by God hym selfe, the  
very ground and somme of al goodnes, yea  
and that is of suche perfeccion, that if any  
mortal man had inuented the same, he shuld  
thereby

### The Image

thereby haue woorthely deserued immortall  
praysle and fame, the groundes therof are so  
commendable and necessary. For surely I  
neuer hadde other then very good and reue-  
rent opinion of it in all my lyfe, and yet in  
dede Walter I dayly se and haue sayd that  
wedded men for the more parte haue alway  
woful and cumbrous lyues, vpon groundes  
and occassion ministred by theyr wyues. But  
for very trothe by the defaulte and negly-  
gence of them selues, that commonly lacketh  
eyther grace or discretion to order and vse  
theyr wyues as they shuld do. Which neuer  
thelesse is not to be marueyled at, for surely  
the ryght feate therof is a secreete that God  
reueleth not to all men, lest then they shulde  
lyue in such continuall pleasauntnesse and  
felicitie that they wolde neuer wyllyngly de-  
parre this lyfe: whiche by thopinion of the  
Whoppans is a great suspecte of perdition,  
but as for me in dede I haue the gyft ther-  
of. And therfore I ensure you, haue bin ve-  
ry desyrous to mary. yet not so muche for  
mine owne commoditie, as for that I wold  
gyue other men example how to vse and go-  
uerne theyr wyues in the ryght sort, wher-  
by to expell the inconuenience that I per-  
ceauie doth ensue by the contrarpy, but my  
chauce hath not bin to obteyne, For the de  
will

of Idleness.

wyll to emperthe so good a purpose of quietnes in the worlde by one meanes or other, hath alwayes hyndred my suite, whiche is the very cause that I am so longe tyme unmarried, and for no such errour or euill opinion as ye haue vntreuly surmised of me, for the more playne declaration whereof, I haue herewithall, sent you a note or coppe of such letters as with careful hart I wrote befoze this vnto dyuers to entreate for my selfe vppon marriage, whiche when ye haue perused, then wyl I declare vnto you furthier of my mynde in this behalfe.

**T**here Baldwyn Bachelor beinge sure to a certeyne Gentlewoman for marriage, wytteth to a frende of hers for to haue his helpe and furtheraunce therein.

**The thyrde Chapter.**

**A**fter my very hartty commendacion, ye shall vnderstande that partly for mine owne comfozte and commoditie, knowynge by sundry meanes what ioyes and felicitie there maye be in marriage: and partly moued of compassion, perceaynge a number of men ignorantly abusynge them selues in orderynge of theyr wyues (whiche by my

B. i.

good

### The Image.

God ensample myght be reformed) Ioue in  
misericorde and great inquiētneſſe: I am hert-  
ly determined with all ſpede to be a married  
man, but yet not myndynge to beſtowe my  
ſelfe ſo vnaduiſedly, for any haſte, as to  
chooſe a wyfe for couerſe of goodes or land.  
Wherreas my harte wyl not ſerue me to lone  
and fauour the perſon: nor for doſynge lone  
or fauour, where as there is not ſome con-  
uenient abilitie in ſubſtaunce towarde ſuche  
charges as foloweth marpage: norther yet  
for both where as the age ſhall much differ  
from mine owne. Whiche thynges circum-  
ſpectly conſydered, I iudge them all accor-  
dynge to my hartes deſyre, with a number  
of good conditions to be ioyned together in  
myſtres W. your kynſwoman, to whome of  
late I haue bin ſuter in that behalfe, and do  
perceauē by ſundry meanes, that ſhe wyl for-  
lowe your aduyce. Wherfore ſy I ſhat be  
ry hartely deſyre you to haue your helpe and  
furtheraunce therein. Whiche to recompence  
(yf my ſute take place) I dare be holde to  
promyle you a thouſande thankes of her  
part, for the ſpedynge of her to ſo good a  
huſbande, as by my demeanoure towardeſ  
her I entende to ſhewe my ſelfe. And yet for  
all that, I haue ſuch diſpayre and miſtruſte  
in the matter, that do the beſt ye can, I wyl  
waige

of Idleness.

Wage with you forty pounde that I get her  
not, and on my fidelitie pay you truly yf I  
lese. I learned this wager of a crafty priest  
that by such meanes with losynge of a lye-  
tle money, wan a good benefice. Lyke as  
for my parte I trust in this case to lese and  
yet be a geyner, as knowethe the maker of  
marrimonie, whom I wolde gladly had som  
what entreclosed the pleasaunce therof with  
some coller or bytternesse, for feare lest the  
continuall ease and quietnesse that I shall  
fynde therein, shulde happen to cause me de-  
sist and forget to wythe and worke for hea-  
ven. &c.

¶ Wheras Baldwyn had byn suter to a cer-  
teyne Gentlewoman for maryage, and was  
in good hope to obteyne, he receaued  
knowledge to the contrary by letter  
from a Gentleman, that hadde  
partly bin a meane for hym,  
& thereupon wrote backe  
as foloweth.

The fourth Chapter.

**A**fter my ryght hartie commendacions,  
ye shall vnderstande that I haue recea-  
ued your letter conceyninge a determi-  
nate nay in my sute to the Gentlewoman ye  
wote

B.ii.

### The Image.

Note of, whiche with a forced patience I am contented to accepte accordyngely. And in perswadyng my selfe the easelper to bere the same, do consider that and if my desyre had byn graunted, the one of vs shulde of necessity (beinge bozne so farre a sunder) haue bin constrainyd to abandon and forsake our countrey and kynrede, wherby myght ensue to vs both moze vniquietnesse, then any commoditie therof growynge wolde be able to counteruayle.

With this and lyke coniectures, I am nowe faine to seade my phantasie of entente to make lyght what lyeth at my hart mosse heauye. The deuyll I thynke, for despyre caused me nowe (contrarye to my common wont) to tender such sute so earnestly: other els God hath appoynted it as my penance for that I haue oftentimes treated much of lyke matter, whereas in harte I mente nothyng lesse, which requirerth by consequence of equite to mynd much and be lytle regarded. as nowe it foloweth. And yet to accumpit indifferently, me thinketh I can not well ascrybe it to neyther of them both, but all wholy to my selfe, that entendynge by pollycie to expel (as it were) a smarte, haue conctraued a continuall ache. As thus, lamentynge the losse of my verye frende her  
late



Of Idleness.

late husbnde, whiche to my harte was no  
lesse sorrowful, then yf mine owne lyfe shuld  
immediatly haue folowed, I thought that  
yet yf I myght get some commoditie by his  
death, that durynge his lyfe tyme, could  
not be obteyned: the comfozte of the one  
wolde so qualifie the griefe of the other,  
that it shulde the moze easely and sooner be  
digested. And thereupon dyd consyder that  
the moste soueraygne iewel in this worlde  
(whiche many men mysterh) is to haue a wife  
of commendable qualities and conuersation.  
Wherof she (as I had knowen by the repozt  
of hym, whose iudgement beinge grounded  
on experience, was not to be doubted) dyd  
appeare to be one. And therfore to recouer  
her as my recompence, was the original and  
onely cause of my sute at the fyrst vnto her.  
Whiche sythens by circumstances dyd en-  
crease to such perswasieon of speede (in mine  
opinion) that I accompted her as obtained.  
And therewithall pacyfyenge my former tor-  
ment, as counterpoysed with the same, dyd  
recuue my moztifyed spirites with the blos-  
somes, wherof fewe men synderh the fruite,  
& accepted her in harte none other but as a  
member or parcell of my selfe. Which now  
beinge concluded contrary, can to me be no  
lesse paynesfull, then the losse of mine hande

### The Image

by any other lynne of mine owne body, the  
langour wherof is incredible to be wyrtten.  
Thus both it now appeare what it is to con  
tende ageynst the deuine purueyance, as in  
murmureinge ageynste the hande of Godde,  
(whiche we lyttle knowe for what well or  
wo it is mente) to go aboute the alteration  
therof by worldly pollicie, whiche for the  
moze parte turneth to our owne harme. As  
ensample by my selfe that entended to a  
noyde the smarte that I haue doubled.

Wherefore from henceforth my counsell and  
practise shalbe in felicitie not to presume, nor  
in aduersitie to dispayre, neyther yet to em  
ploy our wyttes for to seke the alteration  
of neyther, but with humble spirite suffer  
the gouernour to proceade, trustynge all to  
be for the best, as in dede for my parte nowe  
in this extremitie and perversenesse of for  
tune, I fynd the same by experience, for by  
the myssynge of my mynde, mine affection is  
altered into meditation, whereby I do con  
sider both his power and mine owne weke  
nesse, moze then before tyme I dyd. And  
therewithall as the best thyng that I may  
perceane to haue obteyned by this my sute  
and enterpryse, I satisfye my selfe not thin  
kyng my trauell and good wyll to be spent  
all in vayne. &c.

Here

Of Idleness.

**C**here Babbyn wyrteth to the Gentlewoman mencioned of in the last letter. The fyfth Chapter.

**B**ycause I am loth to bestowe moze kindnes on you, then of your parte shall thankfully be accepted, I haue me commended euen as hartely and as often as best can content your mynde and none other wyse. So now may ye perceaue what a profitable and lonyng husbände ye myght haue of me, if ye had bin happy, for hereby doth appeare that I loue not to bestowe any thing in wast, and yet the same notwithstanding, so satisfie your phantasie, can be contented to giue you libertie ouer the treasurie of my harte, to spende therof at your owne wyll and pleasure. Further you shall vnderstande that I haue receaued your refuse concerninge my late sute vnto you, whiche on the one parte because it doth so much contrary my desyre, ought not in reason to be a lyttle mine vniquietnes of mynd. But yet on the other syde, considerynge that suche is your wyll and pleasure, whiche I haue alwayes determined to preferre and folowe a bove mine owne, I can but accept it in good parte, and be contented therewith, and for the tyme wyl no moze trouble you with any  
B. iiii. further

### The Image

Further request in that behalfe, as in Deeth  
there is good cause why, for as I vnder-  
stande ye are already els where prompted,  
wherof God sende you ioy. And as for my  
parte if reason in me do not the rather sub-  
due affection, I entende to practise the com-  
mon prouerbe, which sayth that newe loue  
dymeth away olde sorowes. But surely it  
shalbe done all by protestation, that ye fall  
not wydowe ageyne, for and if ye do, I will  
ones more attempt you, what so euer pro-  
myse shall happen to passe me in the meane  
tyme, trustynge to speede neuer the worse at  
your handes, though nowe for certeyne con-  
siderations I seme to take the mistynge of  
your good mynde lyghter then inwardely I  
feele it.

Further concernynge my deare frende  
your notable late husbnde, lyke as it is not  
possible to recouer ageyne his body, so were  
it injury to suffer his deserved good fame pe-  
ryshe. For the preservation wherof I haue  
here withall sent certeyne verses in maner of  
an Epitaph, which I pray you cause to be  
grauen and fixed on his sepulture, and thus  
hartely fare ye well.

### The Epitaph.

Lettes lyeth here, so fell his fatall houre  
Blethin surnamed, of Southwales the flour

Of Idlenesse.

In knowledg of the lawe, woorthy eternal  
fame.

In wysedome and temperaunce, coequall to  
the same.

With all good qualities, shortly to conclude  
And honeste trade of lyfe moste plenteously  
enbode,

Whom cruel death alas, in his. xxxv. years  
Wastynge of this worlde, hath layde a  
longe on beare.

Wayle his want Welchmen, to rathe ebbed  
was his tyde.

God sende you many suche, and lenger to  
abyde.

¶ Where as a certeyne Gentlewoman bare  
in hande, that she was determined neuer  
to mary, and was neuerthelesse lykely  
to be muche sued vnto for marpage,  
here Babdlyn informeth her by  
his letter, vnder what sort she  
were beste to vse and gyue  
ouer her suiters.

The xvj. Chapter.

God mylres R. I commende me vnto  
you, beinge ryght soyr that I can not  
season my commendations with some  
hartynesse, howe be it I assure you it is not  
B. h. left

### The Image.

leste vndone for any lacke of good wynde,  
but onely for that I am not as nowe master  
of mine owne harte, and can therfore in no  
thyng better any perfecte hartynesse, yet ne-  
uerthelesse yf it may do you any pleasure to  
haue my harty commendacions, ye maye be  
therin as it were your owne carer. For  
doubtlesse my harte is with you, so that ye  
maye vse the office thereof euen as ye lyke  
your selfe. And then hauinge the hart after  
suche sort, it maye not be fordoyne but that  
the body must nedes be at your commaunde-  
ment. And if ye doubt the contrary on my  
behalfe, I praye you commaunde me to do  
what lately ye denyed me of, and then the  
truth wyll appeare. Further, whers as ye  
refuse to accept me in mariage: yet not for  
any mislykinge as ye say, but onely for that  
ye are vitterly determyned neuer to mary:  
Surely I accompre my selfe more bounden  
vnto you, for that gentle answere with your  
frendely enterteynemente besydes, then I  
shulde be to some other for the graunteynge  
my whole request, & therfore if in any thyng  
I may do you seruice or pleasure, ye shalbe  
well assured thereof. And as a prooffe or er-  
nest peny of the same, I wyll at this tyme be  
so bolde as somewhat to counsell you con-  
cernynge such matter as, I suppose ye haue  
presently moste nede to be well aduysed of.



### Of Idlenesse.

Which is (syth as ye saye ye are determined neuer to marry) somewhat to shewe you vnder what maner it shalbe best for you to vse, and giue ouer such as may happen to sue vnto you for mariage. Which kynde of suiters ye shall vnderstande are deuided in thre sundry sortes. The one sueth for loue of the person, another for loue of her lynyng, and the thyrde are they that make of wooynge theyr passyme or recreation: practysynge by suites at large done in sport, howe to fashion them selues and place theyr wordes ageynst such tyme as they shall happen to be earnest suiters in dede, and not meanyng to marry althoughe theyr request were graunted, but rather scoffyngly to retreate, and dishonestly make theyr aduantage of that they myght haue had. The diuersitie and dispositions of which persons it shalbe necessary for you to endeuer your selfe with all the strenghtes and pollicie that possible ye maye deuyse to perceaue and knowe, and thereafter to giue them enterreynement and answer.

For as to any of the fyrst sort, a sodayne refuse is death without redemption, and therfore vnto such you may not gyue the repulse at fyrste, but rather with an answer of double vnderstandyng, by lytle and lytle quaple theyr hope of speede: Or otherwys

### The Image.

wylse by counterfaytinge your selfe to be free  
warde oꝝ entangled with some other euill  
tatche, to make them thinke you better lost  
then founde, so that they maye rather seme  
to gyue ouer then to be refused.

But as for the seconde meynyng (whereof  
God wote there are so many) ye can not vse  
them to euill. For surely vnto suche wretches,  
the very torment and payne of hel (so  
that the pooze soule were saued) is scarcely  
sufficient punishment. And therfore besides  
an vtter nay at the fyrste, to shewe them as  
much sullayne strangenesse as ye can deuise,  
whereby the rather to byngne them in dis-  
payre of speede, shalbe but wel done: Respecte  
yet somewhat to be had that ye seme not to  
take vnrhankefully that whiche is offered  
vnder a frendly pretence, and beware that  
in such case ye gyue no credyte to any crea-  
ture that speaketh in theyr fauoure oꝝ fur-  
theraunce. For no doubt it is often sene that  
such lutes grounded on couerise be so com-  
passed with golde and gyftes, that manye  
tymes one frende selleth another, whereby  
bothe the byer and seller are geyners. But  
woe may be the pooze wyfe that payeth for  
all, and yet is neuer the rather marped, for  
in such case the goodes be marped, and not  
the woman, and as we may se by experience  
euen

**Of Idlenesse.**

epher of them cheryshed and set by accorde  
byngly.

But nowe to the thyrd sort of suters,  
these elyssh dissemblers that I spake of be  
fore, when ye haue a lyttle denyed them,  
whiche I wolde wyshe were doone vnder a  
mylde indifferente sort, onely to eschewe  
that ye minister them none occasion to boast  
of any thyng graunted, and not to byng  
them in better dispayre of speede, wherby to  
gyue ouer theyr lute and lese no more but  
theyr labour. For that were to lytle per  
nuance, and therfore ye muste in suche case  
when ye haue sayde them nay, counteruayle  
your worde with a lounge lyppe or frendly  
eye, as though, not perceauynge theyr dis  
simulation, ye ment them muche better then  
ye spake, and therwithall to encrease theyr  
affection, ye must enterrepne them with poze  
and fashyon, as ye shall thynke most to theyr  
contentacion, which neuerthelesse muste be  
done with suche demure simplicitie, as ic  
seme not to passe the boundes of woman  
hed and honest estimatis, and vnder so good  
awayte, that ye seme not in the same pre  
sence to shewe the lyke grace and familiar  
tie to any other: assayinge by suche meanes  
to make of such counterfeytes ryght venera  
bles, and then smyllynge at theyr smarte,  
scornes

### The Image

leoznefully to gyue the ouer, on my sayth I  
thinke in conscience were none offence at al.

I wyte you these thinges as a warning  
that ye recompence not the sayner with the  
saythfulles rewarde, nor marry away your  
lyuyng, and remayne wydowe your selfe  
for feare of repentaunce, as in dayes passe,  
and not thynkyng thereby the rather to al-  
lure you (although I be one of the first soze)  
to shewe me any grace or fauour. yet neuer  
thelesse if any such good chaunce happen me  
being for truch in my behalfe not loked for,  
and yet much trusted vpon, I assure you, ye  
shall gratifie your selfe with suche a good  
turne, as vpon the profe ye wyll be soze to  
haue so longe tyme forborne, and so fare ye  
well.

¶ Here Batodyn wyrteth to a certeyne  
Gentlewoman that was daunge-  
rons to be sene or spoken with:  
all by her suters.

### The seventh Chapter.

**M**ystres B. after my hartly commenda-  
tions, whereas ye ble to absente your  
selfe and wyll not be spoken withall  
at suche tyme as I and other good felowes  
come to treate with you vppon maryage, I  
can

### Of Idlenesse.

can do no lesse for good mynde that I heare  
you, but to wythe that ye wolde leane suche  
demeanoure. For I assure you there are ma-  
ny men that gather euyl opinion therof, and  
thinke the cause to be that doubtyng your  
selfe to go with chylde, ye abashe to be sene  
in any p[re]sence of skillfull iudgement. How-  
be it as for my parte, on my sayth I suspect  
no such thinge, but reckon surely that ye do  
it onely of entent thereby to annoyde suters,  
whose p[re]sence and wordes myght els hap-  
pen to win you vnto wedding, by the which  
ye shulde leane your chaste wyddowlype,  
and lese the merite that in heauen is for the  
same ordeyned. Howe be it, and if your  
meanynge be none other then so, then sithe  
ye are so well assured in refusynge of suche  
requestes, as befoze this I haue harde you  
here in hande, better were in my mynde that  
ye common therof with as many as lyst sue  
vnto you, for the more temptacion ye with-  
stande, the greater shalbe your mede. And  
yet bicause my lernyng in scripture doth not  
extende to discusse what blyssfull rewarde  
may be due for such unnaturall and frutes  
penaunce, the best and surest way for you in  
my iudgemente were to accepte suche one of  
your suters to your husbände or familiar  
frende, as ye may thynke loueth you moste  
hastely,

### The Image

hartely, and in no wyse to refuse them all  
least hereafter ye repent as other haue done.  
For what merite God gyueth to the chaste  
souldes I knowe not, but it is very certeine  
that the Goddesse Venus punisheth ryght  
sharply the bodyes that are repugnaunt to  
her lounge lawes, as partly doth appeare  
by the hyssories folowynge, which I tel you  
are not fayned, but wyrtten by good auctho  
ritie in the booke of Cupides sayntes, and be  
thus. There was sometyme a knyght na  
med Permalides that loued most hartely the  
Lady Agglarose, who for no sute that pos  
sible myght be made, wolde ascende to his de  
syre. The importunate sorowes whereof  
shulde shortly haue ended his wofull lyfe  
dayes, hadde not bin the greate mercy of  
Venus, who by playne miracle, ppteinge to  
se her faythfull seruaunt so tormented with  
the crueltie of a mercilesse Lady, made an ex  
chaunge of both theyr desyres, so that this  
Lady loued this knyght aboue al creatures,  
and he to the contrary hatd her beyonde al  
reason, whereupon when she had longe time  
folowed him with many lamentable and pi  
teous complayntes requyringe his fauoure  
and myght not obteyne, dyed euen of loue.  
So thus ye maye se Venus can wounde her  
disobediēt subjects with their owne weapon.  
There



of Idleness.

There was also before this one Narcissus,  
of suche betwix and semelines, that dyuers  
women came out of farre countreys onely to  
beholde hym, wherof many perished by his  
defaute, for he wolde in no wyse encline to  
loue, whiche caused Venus to take displea-  
sure and to punyssh hym as ye shall here. On  
a tyme this Narcissus, to go in a disguising  
with other companie, happened to attyre  
hym selfe in the apparell and garmentes of  
a woman, and passynge ouer a bydge, per-  
ceaued in the water the shadow of his owne  
comely person and straunge attyre, whiche  
hym thought to be wonderfull semely, and  
thereupon for lacke of discretion to knowe  
hym selfe, whiche Venus withdrew from  
hym, had no mynde on his disguised appa-  
rell, but iudged verely the same to be one of  
Dyanas Nymphes, who in suche lyke pla-  
ces vsed oftentimes for recreation in the som-  
mer season to make her abode, and therup-  
pon waxed so amorous of his owne sha-  
dow, that after many humble requestes of  
loue, and instant despyres of speche, speede-  
lesse he determined to refer hym selfe to her  
grace and mercy, saying that in so goodly a  
creature loue nor pitty coulde not be absent,  
and then with armes displayed lepte into  
the ryuer, thynkinge to embrace his Lady,

C. i.

who

### The Image

(who also helde her armes abroad of entent  
to his sonde opinion, onely for to receaue  
hym) and was there drowned. Thus was  
his crueltie rewarded with folly.

There was also not longe agoe in Ber  
noa, both a knight and a Lady, who for the  
excellencie of theyr persons and qualities,  
were of such fortune, that dyuers sued vnto  
them for loue, and coulde by no meanes ob  
teyne. For not regardynge faythfull harre  
and good mynde, they courted so much high  
parètage & great abilitie, that they thoughte  
none of theyr suiters worthy to be accepted.  
The knyghtes name was Malmerophus,  
and the Ladyes Syllera, who at length by  
thappoyntment of Venus fell both in loue,  
and were amorous eche of other. Then ey  
ther of them called to remembraunce howe  
many suiters they had suffered to peryshe by  
theyr obstinacy in loue before tyme. And  
thereuppon fell into despayre by remoyce of  
conscience, thinkyng verely that in so much  
as they had so misused Venus lawes, Ve  
nus from whom all grace to obteyne in loue  
both preceade, wolde graunt them none, al  
though it were required and deuoutly pray  
ed for. In so much that the one of them ne  
uer durste motion thother of loue, but al  
wayes tormented them selues with inward  
desyre

**Of Idlenesse.**

Desyre and desperate thoughtes, tyll at  
lengthe this Lady Spilera in folowynge the  
feminine nature, which of necessitie must by  
some meanes disclose theyr secreete thoughtes,  
wrought all her mynde and oppynion  
with spike in her sampler, and sone after dy  
ed only of loue longing, wherof when Mal  
merophus had knowledge, and wytt of her  
sampler, as enraged for sorrow, he strangled  
hym selfe therewith and so miserably ended.  
Thus for lacke of audacitie to disclose theyr  
myndes eche to other (which grace for their  
stubburne boldenes in refusynge of trewe  
louers before tyme, Venus withhelde from  
them, they dyed all bothe at mischiefe, wh  
che if it be well noted, is a greate ensample  
for other to eschewe lyke offence in any  
bynge the lyke or worse punishment.

Wherfore I wyll aduise you to accepte  
some one of your surers vnto your fauoure,  
and to leue this hardnes of hart in scorning  
theyr paynfull lyes. For doubtles Venus  
is now of as great a power as euer she was  
and as able to punishe her rebelles. yea and  
althoughe by her godly pacience she spare  
you a season vpon pofe of amendement, yet  
maye you be ryght sure, she wyll at lengthe  
punishe you with some displeasure if ye thus  
continne. Wherfore at your parcell do as ye

### The Image.

lyst nowe that ye are warned, & thynke not  
that I wyte you these examples of intet to  
ferre my selfe vnto your fauour, albeit that  
to my iudgement I am he that moste loueth  
you. For ye haue so often denyed me that  
I am bitterly desperate therein: as shortly  
wyl appeare by the ende of my wofull lyfe  
days for sorowe of the same, which chaunce  
of all creatures ye shall haue moste cause to  
lament. For thereby shall ye be sure both to  
lose a frende in earth, and to haue a shrowde  
Sollicitor in heauen. For when Venus  
shall enquire the cause of my todayne com-  
myng thither, then muste I nedes disclose  
your obstinate demeanour in loue, which no  
doubte wyl be extremely punyshed, vlesse  
your amendement may appeare vpon some o-  
ther in the meane tyme. Or els and if your  
crnell hart be so stout that it wyl not alter  
for feare of her displeasure and punishment,  
yet then let it alter in hope of her grace and  
fauour. For doubtesse she is not so rigorous  
in punyshynge her rebelles, but that she is  
more benigne and gentle in cheryshynge her  
faythful and obedient seruauntes. And ther-  
fore in all holy scripture this is taken for  
her posy or prouerbe, loue and lacke not,  
and if that be not inough to bynge her boun-  
tie in your credence, ye shall to affirme the  
same

### Of Idlenesse.

same, here of a myracle whiche in the olde  
dayes she wrought, and was thus. One  
Sigmalion, (a verpe connyng grauer of  
workeman in stone and mettrall) made in A:  
labaster the image of a woman whiche was  
of so goodly propozition, fauour, and coun:  
tenaunce, that on a tyme as he behelde her  
he was sodaynely raken with her loue, and  
that so feruently that he could not suffer to  
haue her out of his syght. Whereuppon he  
bought her cosely and ryche apparell, and  
dayly wold set her at his table, carue to her  
of his best meates, at after none reade befoze  
her stozyes of loue, shewe her all his mynde  
in secrete causes, and at nyght rake of her  
clothes and lay her by hym in naked bedde,  
greatly bewaylynge her deadly dombnesse,  
and so continued a longe season, notwith:  
standynge the contrary counsell of all his  
frendes. Which demeanoure the blessed Ve:  
nus from aboue ryght well behelde, greatly  
commendynge his stedfast lounge courage,  
and to recompence the same, on a wynter  
nyght as he lay in his bedde, well nere fro:  
zen with embrasyng this colde image, she  
gaue her naturall heate, lyfe, and quycke:  
nesse, so that they were afterwarde married  
together, and lyued longe tyme in blyssfull  
loue, and much ioy, tyll at length this Sig:  
malyon

### The Image.

malyn dyed, and then was his wife turned  
ageyne into an image of Alabaſter, which  
to this day ſo remayneth, and is accom-  
plished through out all Greece theyr beſte and chie-  
feſt pylgrimage for to remove or expell the  
paſſions and paynes of ielouſy, which for  
truth came tyd to knowledge and credence  
by this miracle. The princes of Tarent, but  
after ſome booke of Ottronto, ſyndynge  
her Lord and huſbande in bedde with one  
of her Chamberers, fell into ſuche a malyn-  
coly and penſiſeneſſe, that in maner ſhe was  
at the very poynt of death, and then beinge  
warned by a viſion to repayre vnto this bleſ-  
ſed image for helpe, dyd auow her pylgry-  
mage thither, and receaued this oracle,  
(Marſoyle thees duan Guilca ancozne Rog  
harre arta ) being expounded by the priests  
of that temple to this effecte in Engliſhe.

If to weare the horne thou fynde thy ſelfe  
agreu'd. Gyue hym backe agayne, and  
thou ſhalt ſone be eaſed. Whereby bothe ſhe  
and ſyphens that tyme a great number of o-  
ther beinge in lyke caſe haue byn wonder-  
fully comforted and holpen. Wheras befoze  
the diſeaſe was in maner vterly incurable.  
And ſurely all this is done by grace deriued  
from Venus. Wha creature then trowe we  
may better ſpende theyr tyme then in the ſer-  
uice



### Of Idlenesse.

Wise of her that so benygne rewardeth her  
faythfull seruantes, doubtesse none. Whee  
foze yet ones agayne, as he that for al your  
vnhyndnes shewd, can but wythe you wel,  
I wyll exhort you to enter and spende your  
lyfe in blyssfull loue, which vnfyled amouge  
worldly felicities is the very greatest ioye.  
Howbeit I speke it not as he that hath had  
any experience therof, for alway it hath bin  
my chaunce to loue vbeloued, whiche for  
trithe is the greatest payne in earth, but yet  
the same maketh me perceave in reason the  
blyssfulnes which may be in your loue, that  
are beloued: for of this I am certeyne, con-  
trary circumstance wyll haue contrary ef-  
fecte, so that lyke as my loue is paynfull,  
bycause I am not beloued, euen so muste  
yours nedes be pleasaunt bicause ye are lo-  
ued, wherefore enter in: o it hardely with a  
gladde harte, and that ye may well perseue  
in the same, ye shalbe assured of my daylye  
prayer, that sometyme trusted to be of lyke  
religion, and nowe an abiecte al desperate,  
but yet not by mine owne default or deser-  
uinge. Wherefore my truste is that Venus  
wyll take at me no displeasure, but at least  
way recompence my well meanyng with the  
name of a Venerian, whiche shalbe a suffici-  
ent title for me after this lyfe, to chalenge  
a tabernacle

### The Image

A tabernacle in her eternall thron. And  
nowe to conclude if ye shall thynke me wor-  
thy to be impured of folly, for that I delare  
so much with such payned proces vppon so  
weake a grounde or matter, I pray you con-  
sider therewithall that the newe wyne or o-  
ther troubled lycour, beinge in a close vessel  
wyl for lacke of aper (if it be not vented)  
swell and bruste his caske. For even so in  
lykewyse my pooze harte beinge replenished  
with the anguythe of affection and desyre, yf  
it shulde not thus by vttering of my mynde  
be suffred to allwage and ease it selfe, wold  
ouer swell with deadly sighes, and shortly  
seuer in sunder. And if ye be so harde of cre-  
dence that ye wyl not thinke al these things  
to be trewe, yet then I shall desyre you at  
least way to take them for your pastyme in  
the readyng, as I haue done in the wy-  
tyng. And so hartely fare ye well.

**C**Here Bawdyn wyrteth to a certeyne gen-  
tlewoman at whose handes he had  
bin disdeynefully refused vpon  
treary of maryage.  
The. viii. Chapter.

**M**istres B. after my hartly commendat-  
tion, whereas by your sundry naves  
vpon

Of Idlenesse.

Upon the sute that befoze this I made vnto  
you for mariage, I was minded to giue ouer  
the same. Yet your gentle intercepnemente  
at our last being together, when as ye graun-  
ted to common with me further therein at  
conuenient season, & after appoynted with  
my seruauant both tyme and place of metyng  
for such purpose, made me somewhat to re-  
newe my former intent, and to attende for  
you accordyngly, howe be it ye came not,  
which caused me (beinge then bounde to-  
wardes Troynouant) to sende a certeyne  
frende of myne to knowe the cause of your  
stay, vnto whom (not aunsweryng the same)  
ye vnder a disdeynfull sorte vtterly refused  
me, which was moze then neded to be spo-  
ken of at that tyme, albeit that and if your  
fantasy had serued you nedes so to do, yet  
me thynketh ye myght haue doone it with  
moze temperaunce and lesse wordes, lyke as  
it is possible inough I wolde haue done to-  
wardes you, yf ye had graunted my request,  
in which case (on my faith) I am vncerteine  
whether I wolde haue taken oz lefte, for I  
neuer vse thozowely to examine my selfe  
therin, tyll tyme it appeare I maye be at the  
choyse, and that neuer founde I at your  
handes. But and yf I had a gentle retreat  
with thanks for your confirmable good  
mynd

### The Image.

mynd, had bin the least of your recompence,  
and surely no lesse I looked for on your be-  
halfe, specially consyderynge that women  
are or shulde be of a myld and gentle nature.  
And yet maye chaunce that your meanyng  
therin, was better then to some mens iudge-  
ment it sounded, as thus. Perceauynge that  
myne affection towards you was ground-  
ed on speciall good opinion, which I had con-  
ceined of you, ye doubted leasse I shulde  
(euen to the death) lament the losse of suche  
a faultlesse wyfe, so greatly despyed, and  
therfoze of intent to qualifie my grieve with  
the portion of my harme, ye haue ryght gen-  
telly aggrauated the one to mollifie the o-  
ther, and contrary to your conuersation for-  
ced your tonge to declare you both stubborne  
of harte, suspicious of imagination, and in-  
constante of mynd, that lyke as then all  
thinges considered, my losse was not great,  
my sorowes ought not to be muche. And yf  
ye ment me so frendly, I am the more bound-  
den to thanke you, howe be it on my fayth  
to say reothe, I neded nothyng at all of a-  
ny such confortaynes. For lyke as some  
men delyght for to trace the hare, moze to  
perceane the wplynes of her doublyng and  
subtyll skypes, then for any ioye to recoure  
or bynge home the game: Ryght so in lyke  
wise

Of ydolennesse.

Wylle for my parte, haue I vsed such kynde  
of sutes, moze for my solace and recreation,  
and to vnderstande the dealinge and demeanour  
of some folkes, then for any hope or  
intent to obteyne the thyng that I seemed  
to seeke for, as he that hath alwaies thoughte  
the pastyme of wooynge to be muche better  
then the penaunce of weddyng, or and if  
it myshappen me at any tyme to be ouer desirous  
of speede therin, and in conclusion be  
denayd, whereby for lacke of good aduysement  
I chaunce a season somewhat to lame  
my repulse, then in makynge consolation to  
my selfe. I call to remembraunce a number  
of mine acquaintaunce, that vpon obteynynge  
in lyke sutes, whereas they sought  
and loked for all suche commodities as I  
haue iudged to be in you, when it came to  
the prafe they had not only myst the same,  
but mozeouer in the steade therof, found the  
clene contrary, with wonderful vngueris  
and displeasure, repentyng they spede al  
theyr lyfe dayes after, and then streyght  
wayes do reioyce myne owne hap, and bewaile  
theyrs, lyke as a man that hath escaped  
from a thynwzacke, where many of his  
frendes perished, and herewithall am clene  
out of hand deliuered from al such thought  
and care as though I hadde neuer known  
the

### The Image.

the partie, nor mynded suche matter. But  
yet for all these bragges, yf it shall seme vnto  
you by the maner of my wytyng, that  
I take ouer lycht the mytting of your good  
mynde, yet wolde I be ryght soz. that ye  
shulde by the occasion therof, eyther set the  
lesse by your selfe (as to beleue þ in dede the  
thing is no better worth) oz yet to accumpt  
me so ignoraunte, that I can not esteeme  
thynges somewhat accorpyng as they are.  
But rather thynke I pray you, the troth to  
be playne contrary on both partes, and that  
I wyte vnder suche soze eyther as a com-  
mon pollicie, to set lytle by the thinge that  
can not be had, oz els for that I doubte it  
myght dysceyne the grauitie which shulde be  
longe to the number of mine yeares, for to be  
acknowen any thinge intangled with the  
afflictions of lone, although that in dede it  
toucheth me very nere, oz otherwyle that I  
do it because I serue in Barrison and place  
of warre, and wolde by the bolde bearyng  
out of suche a losse, shewe my selfe to be of  
such hygh spirite and inuinsible harre, that  
I wyl not seme to be ouercommen with the  
thyng, wherunto bothe the myghyte and  
wise haue sundry tymes giuen place, where-  
by the outward apparaunce of my weke and  
simple person, by counceylaytynge the in-  
ward



## Of Idlenesse.

warde vertue, after the opinion of some men called magnanimitie (temperately bearynge bothe felicitie and aduers fortune) I maye seme better worthy to supply the same, or better come, and so to assay whether by the spendyng of my good mynde vntewarded, I may fynde meanes to obteyne better estimation then I haue deserued, or at leaste way if I myste of them bothe, yet then to quyet my selfe with the hope of the one, although in vayne. For doubtlesse this transitory life is intangled with so many kindes of miserie, prouokynge pensiuenes, that but lesse a man sometyme wyll flatter hym selfe with some kynde of vayne glozy, or contrary to the lyuely eye of his reason, delyght or reioyce in some one trefle or other, the calamitie and vnquietnesse therof, wyll so frette nature, that none shalbe able to lyue out halfe theyr naturall course, and therfore although it shal seme vnto you, that I might better haue spent the tyme then so to make lute, or thus to declare my selfe, yet here so muche in my fauoure I beseeche you, as to thynke that it is done to some purpose of effecte, and not all of folly, as in dede it may happē ye shal hereafter so perceaue at large, and in the meane tyme I pray you accept the simple verses folowynge, as my frendely token

**The Image**

token, and so wythynge you as to my selfe  
bothe in lodgyng and otherwyse, hartely  
tace ye well.

The wise fathers of old haue alwaistoughe  
That we shulde not shewe vnto our foo  
The penituenes of our secreete thought  
I though in our hart, we suffer deadly woo  
But here it foze as if it were not soo  
For our dy comfort shal cause him to be glad  
Where as our wyl is, for to make hym sad.

But reason alas, in me is so appalled  
That I can not vnto such counsell fall  
I hough in my letter I haue right now assaid  
And falsely my selfe a dissembler did call  
Bicause that you my deadlyest foo of all  
Shulde not perceaue mine woful heuynesse  
For well I wot ye ioy at my dystresse.

Yet folly nowe fozeeth me, the truche for  
to expresse.

What so euer my letter doth conteyne  
Wherefore with woful hart I opely confesse  
Howe þ your loue hath put me to such peine  
That with the lyfe I may no more susteyne  
And if there be no grace but that I shalbe ded  
yet this shalbe my last, God send you well  
to wed.

**Here**

Of Idlenesse.

**T**here Barodyn wytyng to a certeyn  
Gentleman (his frende) amonge ocher  
thynges, bewayleth hym selfe of his  
euill speede in wooynge and crea-  
tie of mariage.  
The. ix. Chapter.

**M**After D. After my very harte com-  
mendations, trustyng that ye are  
past the danger of this late vniuersal  
sickenesse, the newe sweate, these shalbe to  
aduertise you, that euen so am I, and that  
with as much peryll of lyfe as euer man es-  
caped, howe be it all for the beste as it hath  
chaunced, for wheras before tyme, by reas-  
son of my age and euill dyete, my complexi-  
on was playne malyncolyke, mixed with o-  
uer muche collicke, now by this meanes the  
vniuersally heates are subiect, and all euill  
humours so expelled, that (the blud tempe-  
rately alayed with flegme hauyng mastery)  
I am turned to as goodly a Sangwyne as  
euer ye sawe, and therewithall growen as  
full of loue, as any noppynewe ale is ful of  
barme, the croppe wherof, muche after the  
selfe same sorte (sangwyne not altogether so  
hygh a losse) worketh, couerynge bent and  
bt. craunce, neuerthelesse I am determined  
not to depart therewith, but onely vnder the  
blyssfull

### The Image

blissfull bande of matrimony, whiche holy  
and pleasaunt sacrament, bycause I wyl no  
ther rashely enter into, nor yet bashfully (for  
any refuse at a few handes) gyue ouer. I  
haue with good aduysment made a kalen-  
der of all such maydens, and wydowes (in  
these partes) as can content me that waye,  
whiche in the whole together with an olde  
fellowes wyfe, that I dare saye wyl not  
lyue out this next Marche, are to the num-  
ber of. xi. Upon which appointment I haue  
not shewed my selfe to be so nyce or daunge-  
rous to please, as to allowe, none other but  
onely such as are cleane without any faul-  
te, for feare lest then I shulde not haue so libe-  
rall a choyle in so small a circuite, and ther-  
fore conferringe theyr euyl catches with  
theyr good qualities, I haue accepted or re-  
lected, accordyng to the more parte or grea-  
ter number, hauyng respect therewithall  
for myne owne aduancement, that one pro-  
fytable commoditie shal counteruayle to euyl  
properties, vnesse they be of certeyne nota-  
ble sortes, which are not to be boync withal.  
And more ouer preuentynge lesse my tender  
simple hart myght happen to bruste for so-  
rowe of a repulse, if I shulde laye all my  
whole loue and good mynde in one of them  
at once, and then be refused, I haue taken  
this

**Of yblenesse.**

this order in my sute. When I am somewhat  
well entered in communication of maryage,  
with the fyrst, then after two or thre mee-  
tynges, and before I demaunde to haue any  
direcie aunswere there, I begyn to enter-  
teyne the seconde, and when I haue noted  
in her some one thyng or other to my con-  
tentacion that the other hath not, then  
strenght wayes I returne to knowe her de-  
terminate mynde, which although it be not  
agreable to mine, I greatly force not, for  
then I stande in hope to be aswell spedde  
or better of the seconde, and so procedyng  
in lyke maner with her, I go to the thyrde,  
alwayes reteynynge one within possibilitie  
of speede, vnder this sort I haue alredy per-  
used. vii. of my number, and yet fedynge my  
fantasy with hope that the best is behynde,  
my hart remaineth as freshe and whole as  
when I fyrst began. But yet by saynt Mary  
lyke as it shalbe wylle dome to cast the worst  
before it fall, so I consider that and yf my  
fortune be so euill, that for lacke of skylfull  
interteynement I shulde chaunce to fayle al-  
so of the reste, I doubte it wolde bynge me  
into such perplexitie and sorowe, as I shal  
then be neuer able to expell, for daungers  
once growen to extremite, are seldome or  
never recovered, and therefore fyr I shal des-

### The Image

Expe you so muche to assiste me herein, as to  
accrete me by your letter, vnder what  
soeuer ye blyd your selfe, hypon obteynynge  
in lyke sure, that I may somewhat practyse  
the same, wherein for lacke of power to re-  
compence you otherwys, of this ye maye be  
assured, myne gotten by your meanes (as re-  
son is) shalbe at your commaundement, and  
so hartely fare ye well.

**C** Where as Babdyn serued in Barryson,  
and had compounded with a certeyne Ben-  
sleman, his frende, to repaie thither at all  
tymes of daunger, the same being so streigh-  
ted in a tyme of comotion, that he was for-  
ced for his safegarde to take another  
holde, where as were many Gentle  
women, whiche kynde of furnyturs  
the other greatly wanted, here  
Babdin maketh him request  
to haue some fruition of  
that necessarpe  
commoditie.

### The .x. Chapter.

**T**he rather to allure you for to satisfye  
my necessitie, hauninge presentely a cer-  
teyne kynde of lacke, I haue thought  
good that ye shulde fyrst be aduertysed how  
well I intended towarde you, yf so were  
that



of Idleness.

that for your part ye had needed of me, whiche is none other, but that my lodgyng was prepared to receiue you, and my force in readiness for your defence, yf ye had liked to haue drawn hyther nowe in this dangerous tyme, accordyng to the tenure of our composition and olde bande of amitie. My wellmynnyng wherein, I craue not to be recompensed with any golde or costly iewel. But (by your mediation) with the presence and fauour of some one of your sayre Gentlewomen (wherof as I here saye, ye haue plenty and spare) of intent that being nowe forced to be a man of warre, in very dede, wheras heretofore, I haue bin but as it were a shadowe therof, I may war in loue, and be valiaunt, wherby the rather not onely to withstande, but also to subdue these vnruly and disobedient people that manase to assaulte this Barrylon, beinge a place I assure you, not onely pleasaunt and of greace strengthe both by buyldyng and situation, but also plenuously furnished with men, munitions, and al other thynges requisite for the wars, that grace of amoures only excepted, which beinge had kyndely of it selfe, and not delayed nor peruerterd with the bande of wedlocke, is to a man of warre as a spurre to a dull or slowe horse.

### The Image

lynely, well nere as greate an increase of  
bolde and forwarde harte, couetyng hyghe  
enterpryse, to obteyne honest estimation and  
fauour at his mystrs handes, as dycty wed  
locke appallynge the lynely spirites prouo-  
kerh cowardy. And yet to say trothe I haue  
sometyme knowen wedded men in warlyke  
affayres do ryght boldely and well, but that  
hath byn by waye of desperation, chosynge  
rather to dye, yf fortune wolde ascent, then  
longer to liue vnder such poke of seruytude,  
from the which our Lorde delyuer you, and  
preserue me.

### C The aunswere made to the sayde leter. The. xi. Chapter.

**A**fter my very harty commendations,  
these shalbe to aduertise you that I  
haue receaued your letter, and by the  
same do playnely perceaue your faythfull  
frendeshyppe ment towarde me, greatly to  
my comfote and reioysyng, but not as who  
wolde saye, for that nowe in extremitie and  
inst tyme of tryall, I shulde haue consolati-  
on to fynde my selfe in your behalfe, assured  
of that which befoze tyme I stode in doubte  
of, but rather for that it doth nowe expres-  
ly appeare, that my wyttes and iudgement,  
therof

### Of Idlenesse.

Wherof before tyme I doubred hath serued  
me a ryght, in chosynge suche an earnest  
frende as ye are, consecretynge of you afore  
hande, as inslyp hath folowed, which to re-  
compence with the beste of my lytle power,  
ye shall at al tymes be assured of. Neuerthe-  
lesse as to satisfye your requeste in that yo  
wryte, concernynge my Gentlewomen,  
wherEOF in dede I haue plentie, and spare,  
(as cause reasonable shall requyre) I can do  
you no pleasure therein, for as ye knowe is  
must nedes be done by theyr owne consente,  
and resteth not in me to apoynte, hauyng no  
further charge, but to the defence of theyr  
persons. Howe be it for trothe I haue in  
your behalfe had communication with sun-  
dry of them, aswell Ladyes as other, of  
whom I haue receaued sundry answers,  
for some of them say that if your demeanour  
were good, it is lykely that ye myght be ac-  
cepted nere home, whereas ye are better  
knownen, and not forced thus to sue in for-  
eyne partes, and some say that they are bin  
certeyne whether of bothe may be most mys-  
lykte, your crabbed face or your croked con-  
ditions, and some of them saye, that they  
disdayne to take the refuse of so many, as  
heretofore ye haue bin surety vnto, and some  
also saye, that ye are so spent with age

### The Image.

and tranayle, that to the effect of theyr most  
nede, they thynke that they shulde be but de  
ceaued with you. This is as much as I can  
hether to get at theyr handes, but that they  
acquyte your gentle request, with theyr hart  
y thanks, saythfully promysynge to do  
theyr best for your spede elsewhere, so it be  
not on any of theyr frends, and in affirming  
the same, haue hereunto euery of them set  
theyr handes, and so ryght hartely fare ye  
well, wythynge that the lawes were of such  
lybertie that euery man myght bestowe his  
owne as hym selfe lyketh, for then I know  
where ye shulde for a tyme be well pleased,  
and your very frende thereby much eased.

**H**ere Baldwyn replyeth to the same, and  
perceauynge his continual euill spede,  
determineth to gyue ouer al such  
kynde of lutes.  
**The. xii. Chapter.**

**I**f I were ignorant of myne owne imped  
iments, and euill fortune, or forgetful  
of that I dayely haue in remembraunce,  
(whiche for trothe, more then the number of  
mine yeres, hasteth me to my graue) ye shuld  
haue done but well, vppon the aunswere of  
my late letter, to expresse my faultes, and  
sufficient

### Of Idlenesse.

sufficient cause of refuse, at your Gentles  
womens handes, as ye haue done, and yes  
consyderynge as the tyme nowe requyret,  
that we are of all sydes forced to prepare  
and fashyon our selues for the warres, wher  
in bolde and aduenturous harte (who neuer  
sheweth so wel, as where there is a plesauie  
and amorous mynde) resteth for a principall  
parte, it shulde haue byn good pollicie for al  
men (in mine opinion) not onely to dissem-  
ble and beare eche one with the folly and  
faultes of other, lest the contrary might hap-  
pen to engender eyther frowarde controuersie,  
or feble pensiuenes, but moreouer every  
man for his owne parte to fede and flatter  
them selues with some kynde of vanitie or  
hainglozy, without haniing any respect to de-  
sert, or not deserving, which in dede depen-  
deth much vpon the vaine tryffles and toys  
of women, beinge a kynde of creatures, al-  
though scarce woorthy to be accompted as re-  
sonable, & rather an impediment vnto man,  
vpon matters of grauitie or importauce,  
then any furtherer. yet to encozage battel &  
like mischiese, a very handsome & wonderful  
necessary instrument, which was the onely  
cause (the tyme therunto nowe so requisite)  
¶ I made request to haue some one of yours,  
for to reuine my dull spirites, beinge moztis

### The Image.

Sped with contemplation, to dyre by, and  
make the same moze apt for feates of armes  
and chualtry, alterynge enery vertues qua-  
lities of the mynde, into some boldly exercicise  
of activitie or pollicie of warre. But nowe  
sythe I perceave my selfe by your wyrtynge  
to be thus evyll accepted, at so many dys-  
crete Gentlewomens handes, and for so sun-  
dry faultes and impedimentes as by them is  
alleaged, I am become vtrerly desperate to  
obteyne in any like sutes hereafter, and ther-  
fore do determine no moze to attempte the  
same, but rather yf I may chaunce to escape  
the hasarde and daunger of these warres,  
to be professed an Armyte, and to lyue alone  
in wyldernesse, but yet for mine owne conso-  
lation in the meane tyme, consydering that  
the thyng which can not be hadde, ought  
wysely to be forborne, I thought it good  
pollicie to perswade my selfe that theyr com-  
pany is moze comberous then comfortable,  
and for that purpose dyd delyght to se and  
rede suche bookes as spake of treated any  
thyng to the dyspreyse or blame of women,  
wheras I founde wyrtten aswell by sundry  
Philosophers, that knowe by learnynge  
and natural causes, as also by other Sagies  
that wyse by practyse and experience in ma-  
ner and forme folowynge. First one of them  
sayth



Of Idlenesse.

Sayth that they are crafty conueyers, of all  
maner shrewdnes, and ignozant innocentes  
in all kynde of goodnes. Another saythe:  
Blame not all women though one haue of-  
fended, Say well by the worst, the best may  
be amended. Another sayth: Of that they  
may haue, they set lytle store, And what  
they can not get, they longe for enermore.  
Another sayth: Lybertie they conet, to do  
what they wyl, yet what they take in hand  
commonly they spyll. Another sayth: What  
they be despyred, they vtterly refuse, And  
what they ye denayed, mosse greedely wyl  
they vse. Another sayth: Abyde by them,  
and they are sone coughe, But out of sight,  
and out of thought. Another sayth: For to  
know diuers they alwayes loue, Judgynge  
hym to be best, which they neuer dyd proue.  
Another sayth: They are discryuers of coun-  
cels, and sayners of fables, Not reckyng  
who rolleth his dyce on theys tables. Ano-  
ther sayth: Wery may they be, but satisfied  
neuer, Theys box is inclosed in such a kynd  
of lether. Whiche sayinges soundeth mosse  
blyssfull and comfortable to me, and as I  
trust wyl shortly so crepe into my credence,  
and temper my desyre towardes all women,  
that I shall thynke the beste of them to be  
better lost then founde. For surely all olde

D. b.

wyrters

### The Image.

Wisters do thorowly agree as a very ground  
or principle, not to be denyed or doubted  
of, that the greatest felicitie and most plea-  
saunt parte of marrymonie on the mans be-  
halfe, resteth onely in the woyng and in-  
treacie of maryage, wherof the Goddes be  
thanked, I haue ryght largely had my part  
and yet was alwayes refused, which maketh  
me to thynke my selfe moze happy then wise  
that vnder suche sorte inioyng as it were  
the grayne and leaynge the chaffe, I esca-  
ped the harme that so busely I sought for.

**C**The seconde parte of the Epistle sente  
by Baldwyn Bachelier to Wal-  
ter Wedlocke.  
The. iiii. Chapter.

**L**O Walter, now we may ye perceaue howe  
desyrous I haue byn, and what meanes  
I haue made to marry. For although by  
some parte of my wyrryng I seemed to re-  
proue or scorne suche as I was suter vnto,  
yet for trothe I mente to entreate or flatter  
them, consyderynge that women wyll often  
tymes accept thynges cleane contrary, and  
therfore I thought best to proue both ways,  
but al wold not auayle me, for I was still  
refused, which brought me into suche a per-  
plexitie

Of Idleness.

plexitie and pensynes of mynde, that I  
was well nere faulne into a consumption by  
playne dyspayre and malyncoly, accompring  
my selfe the mosse vnfortunate of all men,  
thus to lose with much traueyle, what com-  
monly other folkes get with ease, and to la-  
ment the lesynge, of that other men repent  
the wyppynge. But such is the frowardnes  
of Fortune, that to comber all men, dispo-  
seth perueray all thynges, as a wyfe to him  
that lacketh skyll howe to guyde her, and  
none at all to the doctours of that science,  
yet at length searching for mine owne ease,  
howe best to quyet my selfe, I dyd consider  
howe God myndeth to furnyssh the heauen, al-  
well of vyrgyns as of martyrs and other  
saynctes, iudgyng that he intendeth to re-  
serue me in this estate, onely for that pur-  
pose, wherby to incrense my felicitie in the  
worlde to come. For I remember where as  
Paule doth but barely allowe matrimonie, he  
commendeth virginite, and therefore for  
mine owne parte, syth this is mine appoin-  
ted talent, I am contented to stande there;  
to, and frome hence forth he wyll seke for no  
change. The mosse that greueth me is, that  
wedded men can not now learne at my hand  
as I entended they shulde do, for doubtesse  
the mystery of that doctrine can neyther be  
disclosed

### The Image

disclosed nor perceived by wordes or wyse  
synge, so well as it may by syght of the do-  
inge, lyke vnto the common experience of  
holdynge the ploughe, which is not so con-  
cerned by repore, as by seynge the thyng  
done. But yet sythen that nowe it maye be  
none otherwyse, I wyl therein wyte parte-  
ly mine opinion, trustynge that it shall take  
some effecte, although not so much as I in-  
tended, yf my sute for marriage had taken  
place. There is a common opinion (and in-  
dede experience oftentimes approuethe the  
same) that the thyng whiche is not well  
come by, prospereth not with the owner, I  
meane to this effecte, men commonly nowe  
a dayes come not by theyr wyues as they  
ought to do, whiche causeth them to agree  
the worse when they be together. For wher  
as they shulde marry for affection to the wo-  
man and in hope of chyliden to be brought  
up in the feare and honour of God, surely  
Walter the more parte of your secte neglec-  
tynge all both, doth make of marriage as it  
were a fox huntynge, which as you knowe  
is not medled withall, but when the case is  
somewhat worth. And then the hunter, after  
knowledge had where the game is, beseteth  
the covert with hewers to course at aduan-  
tage, yf he maye preuentynge before hande  
bpyon

### Of Idlenesse.

Upon diligent inquiry made, what rather  
of bowowe it bleth to resorte vnto, as his  
chefe refuge, and there at thentry taketh it  
with a pursener, when it thinketh to be most  
out of daunger, and so beinge with muche  
crafty polyprie and trauell gotten, is carped  
home with gladnes, by common presumpti-  
on to playne meanyng people for loue of the  
flethe, but contrariplyse within a very short  
whyle the case is pulled of, and the carcass  
not esteemed. And enen so it is of these greedy  
men that martyereth for the loue of ryches,  
without respect to the woman, or her quali-  
ties, who not only suborneth her familiers  
for money, in steede of heuours to be playne ly-  
ers, exaltinge the suer above all other men  
in such qualitties or habilitie, as they shall  
perceane the simple woman moste to delyre,  
or otherwyle perswadeth her vnder collour  
of religion, as in safegarde of the dissem-  
blers lyfe, that els wolde dye for loue, when  
as in dede he neuer loued other then her ly-  
uynge, but moreouer puenienteth her at such  
handes, as she is most lykely to resorte vnto  
for counsell, whiche crafty counceller, al-  
though he minde to further the purpose, yet  
wyl he not speke therein for doubte to be  
suspected of corruption, but when she com-  
meth to seke his aduysce, he is then lyke a  
pursener,

### The Image

pursenet, and knytteh by the matter which  
lone after is repented. For the good man  
regardynge none other but onely the thyng  
that he chesely sought (which was the good  
and lande) esteemeth not the wyfe, and then  
the fyndynge her selfe disceaued of the lone  
and good mynde that she looked for, casteth  
to shorten his days by anger and displeure,  
trustyng to speede better next. And so many  
ages disorderly begon, haue commonly com  
brous continuance, and an euill ende, I  
make this lytle dygression Walter to put  
you in remembraunce, ageynst your next ma  
ryage, if you come therto, for surely by that  
ye surmyse that I haue an euill opinion of  
maryage, I suspecte that eyther you feele  
the same discommodities your selfe, & that  
you wolde gladly haue me to be in like case,  
or els you are lyke to the greedy ryche man,  
that is lothe to haue any poore neyghbours,  
yet not for any charitie that is in hym, but  
rather for feare lest they wolde be bozrow  
ers. What I meane hereby I doubt not ye  
knowe well inough. And now to the effect of  
my promys which was to instruct you howe  
men myght lyue moste quyetely with theyr  
wyues. You must fyrst vnderstande (Walter)  
that notwithstandinge all the euill proper  
ties and shrewde catches that ever were writ  
ten



### Of Idlenesse.

fen of women, yea oz that is in them, in be-  
ry dede (whiche for trewth is muche more  
then conveniently may be exprested) yet are  
they not therfore to be blamed oz founde  
faulre withall, by reason the same is gyuen  
them euen of very nature, whose gyftes be-  
inge in maner forced of necessitie (be they  
good oz euill) deserue neyther prayse nor  
blame. For sythe the tyme that the serpente  
tempted Adam and Eue, in the similitude a-  
lykenes of a woman, doubtlesse the fraude  
and mallice of that spirite, hath alwayes  
bin most incident to the same sects, & maketh  
them naturally inclyned to dissimulation, in-  
constancy, and frowardnes, with a number  
of other vices. But what of that, shuld we  
exclde them from our company as vnwoor-  
thy, oz shulde we disdeynefully accepte them  
(accozdyng to the common terme) as euill  
necessaries, oz shulde we (beinge worst of al)  
as mistrustynge that the Gods were not able  
to worke therein sufficiently them selues,  
take on vs to alter them by arte. As before  
this Virgyl (whose presumption was pre-  
nented by death) For he after such tyme as  
he hadde atcheued many strange and defuse  
conclusions, enterprysed to make glasse a-  
byde the hammer, determynynge lone after  
to make all women constant in lone, and con-  
formable

### The Image.

formable to the wyll and pleasure of theyr  
husbandes, and al by arte magyke and sor-  
cery, nay nay gods forbidd. And what then,  
mary let vs consider, that lyke as there is  
nothyng in earth so thorowly good, but  
that to some purpose, and after some sorte  
bled, it may be euill. That euen so there is  
nothyng of his owne nature so euill, but  
that to some purpose, and after some sorte  
bled, it may be good, and yet this hope we  
haue of women aboue all other thinges. The  
great god hym selfe vpon the creation of A-  
dam (as apeareth in Genesis) sayde, let vs  
make man an helper, and then made Eue, of  
whom al other women are descended, which  
proueth that being skylfully bled, they must  
nedes be helppynge and comfortable to man,  
for God neuer lyeth, and then me thynketh  
consyderynge that the matter toucheth the  
quyet of mans person so hyghly as it dothe,  
it is moste necessarpe that men shulde applye  
theyr wyttes to serche out the ryght vse of  
them, so as they maye iustely serue the pur-  
pose that God promised, as in dede (Walter)  
for my parte I haue done euen so, and that  
with a contemplatiue spirite, myndynge to  
lyue with them in maryage accordyngly, and  
do perceaue the hole state and mystery ther-  
of, bringe disclosed vnto me by reuelation  
in

Of Idleneſſe.

In my ſlepe, which in effect is thus. **Neome-**  
**des** the God of matrimony, for the conſo-  
lation of maried men, vpon lamentable com-  
playne of theyr miserable eſtate (by reaſon  
of theyr wyues crabbedneſſe) graunted by a  
cerceyne bzaunche of heauen y influence to  
dyſpill into the harte of the byde at euery  
weddyng, a cerceyne kynde of iumour, cal-  
led by the Britiſhs Spurſalke, beinge as  
muche to ſaye as the iuyce or vapour of the  
rynge, and in Englyſhe named a wyues  
corthe, a terme of longe tyme knowne, and  
yet but lately and to fewe men perceaued.  
The nature wherof is vehemently to inſorce  
her ſpites to coner preheminence in certeyne  
payntes, which beinge obteyned and allowed  
her, it diſſoluerh the malice of all her foze-  
mer euill qualities, much after the common  
opinion, that one poyſon expelleth another.  
Hethereto (Walter) I ſuppoſe ye fynde lye-  
tle comfort in my wordes, for that it ſemerh  
they are not by this miracle any thyng a-  
mended, but rather altered from one euill  
into another, which may chaunce is worſe,  
Neuertheleſſe yf you note me well, ye haue  
ſpyght good cauſe to reioyce, for hereby thei-  
r crabbednes that by longe continuance in  
many diſcences was growen to be in maner  
naturall, and therefore incurable, maye be

### The Image

taken away, and in stede therof other things  
placed, that ye maye easely expell if ye lyke  
your selfe. I dare say you maruell what I  
meane by this circumstance, and do longe  
to knowe the effect therof. Well, I am con  
sent that you shall so. Surely the prehemi  
nence that the wyues doth conette at theyr  
husbands handes by vertue of that humour,  
is none other, but onele to haue lybertie in  
thre kynde of thynges, whiche is, to saye  
what they wyl, to haue what they wyl,  
and to do what they wyl, wherin you knowe  
the husbände maye easely bere with them,  
and surely doyng so, they are the most quyet  
and comfortabest creatures, that euer were  
ordayned for man. But restraynyng them  
therof, they are so crabbed and so comber  
rous, as that there is nothyng so displea  
saunt as theyr company, which the discrete  
husbände muste by his wysdome consyder,  
and for his more ease vse them thereafter.  
For seinge that by the lawe they are al both  
but one body, and muste remayne at one bed  
and bourde, it is not in mauer possible that  
he may longe lyue in quyet, when she is thor  
owly offended. Wherefore it shalbe necessa  
ry for him to vse her, lyke as he vseth other  
hyttle thynges, as for example, If ye haue  
a very fayre drynkyng glasse, it is both ne  
cessary

### Of Idlenesse.

cessary in vse and pleasure to the syghes,  
and wyl so continue longe ynough yf it be  
ordred accorpyngly, but and if by rashnes  
or lacke of consideration, you force it more  
then the tender nature therof may suffer, you  
sodenly destroy your owne commoditie, for  
then wyl it breake and be worth nothyng  
at all. And surely euen so is it of a fayre ple  
saunt and lounge wyfe, which is the grea  
test treasure and comfort that man may haue  
in earth, whylest she remaineth in that estate  
and that wyl she tyll her dyinge daye, yf she  
be gentelly vsed, and left to haue her liberte  
etc in these thre thynges. For although  
they vse of theyr owne accorde to submitte  
them selues inough, yet theyr noble harres  
maye in no wyse suffer to be forced nor  
brought into subiection by violence, muche  
lyke for that purpose to the hawke, whose  
nature of all lounge thynges they drawe  
nere vnto, for the female kynde of them is  
alway most stubborne, most eger, and most  
apte to euill, and yet by gentle meanes may  
be releymed and brought to do much pleas  
ure, but the Hawkenr muste beware that  
although he chaunce to checke, or to soze  
away and range, he may not therfore at her  
returne misintreate her with any rygoure,  
but chylfully considering the cause, as lacke

### The Image.

of bathynge, or otherwyle, must pieteusly escheue the lyke, and so patiently suffering for the tyme, maye refoyme and toynne her from her wylde and rammishe nature, by polycie and gentlenesse. Much more reasonable is it then, that the husbände shuld bere, and by suche gentle sufferaunce qualifie the crabbednes of his wyfe. For wheras thone purpose seruerh but only to meyneteyne his bayne pleasure, thother toucheth hym most hyghly, both in the quyet of his person, and estimation of his name, whiche about all other thynges is chesely to be consydered, yea and su... (Walter) geuynge them a face of lybertie to haue theyr owne wyll in these thre popntes, they may by pollycy be trayned to do yours, and in dede some of them wyll so euen of theyr owne mynde and free wyll: Lyke as the hawke when she flyeth well and steeth her fowle, serueth her masters purpose and doth hym singular pleasure, and yet meaneth none other then her owne commoditie, hoine be it, both theyr delyghtes beinge bent to one effect, are serued vnder one. Euen so some wyues are wholy of lyke inclination as theyr husbendes, and then leseth he nothynge at all by graunting them suche lybertie, for then: doyng the thyng that pleaseth her selfe, she is lyke  
wyfe



### Of Idlenesse.

Wise contenteth hym. And some of them also are of such worthy and honorable qualities, that they will shewe them selves in theyr beniuolence, as it were able to compare with the greates Alexander, who after such tyme as he had in a dangerous battell with great peryll of his person, and losse of many men, overcome the myghty kynge Darius, a certeyne prince of the Indians, conuertynge nought els but only the glory of victory, and power to take what he lyst. Receyued hym afterwarde into amitie, and enlarged his dominion with an other kyngdome of his owne. And euen so it suffyseth suche worthy wyues onely to obteyne the preeminence at theyr husbandes handes withoute setteynge the same in bre, but wyl rather of theyr mere and gentle nature inclyne the selues to the wyl and pleasure of theyr husbandes. But in dede some ageyne are so petyse in keepynge theyr prerogatyue, that theynke yf they do any thyng wyteynge to theyr husbandes contentacions, they lese theyr libertie and shame them selues for ever. Such wyues theyr husbandes may neither manace, nor yet intreate, but must comppasse them by pollycie, as thus. Loke what he wolde haue them to do, let hym seme to woulte the contrary, for then thinkinge to

### The Image

serue her owne turne, she wyll serue his, or  
els let hym get some gesses to his table, that  
by way of talke shall surmyle some other  
mans wyfe, which dwellerh a farre of, to  
byle her selfe towards her husbände, vnder  
such sozt as the goodman wolde wythe that  
his wyfe shoulde do, geuyng her much praise  
and commendations for the same, and then  
wyll she for very bayneglozy, to purchase  
lyke report, do in lykewyse, or els let hym  
cause some of her gossypes, whom she hath  
in displeasure (as commonly they are neuer  
without some such) to reioyce and laughe  
her to scozne, for the misusynge of her hus-  
bände, for then wyll she amende onely to  
spyte her enemy withall. But (Walter) like  
as a crabbed Coulte muste be rydden with a  
toughe byt, euen so yf the wyfe be to outra-  
gious she muste be bled after a moze sharper  
sozte, as thus. Let the husbände fayne him  
selfe to be sicke, complaynyng altogether  
in his hedde, and thercupon sende for the  
physicion, with whom he must be at a point  
befoze hande, who at his commynge, shal in  
open presence make the matter lyght and  
put hym in comfozte to do well, and then ta-  
kyng her a parte, shewe her in secreete that  
he is wonderfully inclyned to a franzie,  
ascrybyng hym a speciall dyete for the de-  
fence

### Of Idlenesse.

fence therof, which aswell for Deputy feeding, vnder pretence to ingender good blood as also for gentle intertymment for dout to styre vp the collicke humours, shalbe euens as the goodman him selfe had befoze hande deuyled, & yf afterwarde he shall perceaue her to breake any parte of the same, then must he streyght wayes seme to be starke starunge madde, and amonge other lyght and vnwonted partes be sure to beate her well, and to inforce the matter, make as though he wold leape out at the chamber wyndow, but let not her be to nere at hande lest she happen to helpe him onward, & whē he hath a whyle stormed in his rage, then let the physician come ageyne, and blamyng the wife for breakyng his order, seme to pacify him by medicine, yet fyrst hardly let hym be well bounde, euē after the ryght Bedlem fashyōn, but let it not be to streyght, least finding hym at such aduantage, she happen to be euē with hym, and afterwarde when he is well come to hym selfe, and informed vnder what maner he misintreated his wyfe, let hym vtterly deny it, as though he knew not what he had done in his woodnes, sweetyng and starunge that and yf he wolde be so lewde it were pyttie of his lyfe, affirming that in al the worlde, there is not so beninge

¶ Still,

and

### The Image.

And lounge a woman to her husbande, nor  
that so lytle doth he erue to be vnder such  
toyt bled, but at length when by his wyues  
teares, her broken eye, her blacke spdes,  
and soze bones, he must nedes be perswaded  
that it was trewe, then muste he counter-  
feyte such woeful repentance, as though he  
shulde streyghy wayes out of his wyte agayne  
for pure sorowe, wysshynge rather to dye a  
thousande folde, then to be vexed ageyne  
with the lyke passion. Let him blyse her two  
or thre tymes after this sozte (Walter) and  
I dare warrant she wyl for her owne ease  
obserue the phisitions order, albeit she wold  
disdayne to do the same at her husbandes ap-  
poynement, but the husbande nedeth to be-  
ware and handle hym selfe wysely in those  
poyntes, for and if she chaunce to espye his  
fetche, she is incurable for euer, lyke vnto  
the Fox, which being once tangled in a trap  
and escapech, wyl be so circumspecte, that  
he is neuer taken by any kynde of engine af-  
terwardes. Sundrye other meanes and  
deuises there is to qualifie the rygoure of  
theyr lybertye, whiche yf the husbande do  
consyder and wyttely prouyde for, theyr  
company (be they neuer so euyl) is toller-  
able ynough. But Walter in any wyse, and  
as you intende to eschewe the danger of all  
ch. 92

Of Idlenesse.

they whole naturall malice, looke you  
warne not from your principle, as to suffer  
the to haue theyr wyl in those thre thinges,  
or els at least waye, so to vse them, as they  
maye thynke they haue it, for surely the  
same is so incident vnto them that eyll tyme  
they haue obteyned it, they are neuer con-  
sented, nor in maner of ryght mynde or trac-  
table, and that once allowed them, they are  
quyere pnowge, and framable to manye  
good purposes. Thus Walter I haue per-  
formed my promise, which was to instruct  
you howe the husbande maye beste vse hym  
selfe to lyue quyet with his wyfe, I praye  
God all your sect may perceaue and folowe  
it wel, which I thynke they shulde do much  
the better, yf I confirmed my doctrine by  
some lyuely example of experience, but that  
can I not do in ought that chaunced vnder  
the yoke of matrimonye, by reason I haue  
had no practyse that way, neuerthelesse to  
make you vnderstand, that by gentle meanes  
and good pollicie, there is commoditie to be  
had at womens handes, whiche rygoure or  
violence shal neuer obteyne. I wyl shewe you  
an example, wherunto I was somewhat  
pzyue, that happened of late betwene a cer-  
teyne Gentleman and Gentlewoman, both  
beinge of myne aquauntance, & was thus.

Here

The Image.

**C**here Baldyn to proue that women are  
neuer so muche addicte oꝝ bent to theyr  
owne wyll and opinton, but that by  
wyledome and good pollycie, they  
maye easely be broken thereof,  
Sheweth a lyuely example of  
late experience.

The, xiiii. Chapter.

**O**n a tyme a Gentleman of the West  
partes (who shalbe namelesse) at Chas-  
tynge Crosse in his waye homewardest  
from London (then called Troynouant) ouer-  
toke a certeyne fayre Mayster, whom when  
he had saluted, and by communication dyd  
perceauie that she shulde ryde foure oꝝ fyue  
dayes in his company, he was wonderfull  
gladde therof. For beinge hym selfe a cocke  
of the game, he thought her to be a henne  
of the same sorte, and trusted well to haue  
some iolly good treadynge by the way. And  
therefoze after a lyttle acquayntaunce, de-  
maunded her whether she coude be conten-  
ted to auoide and vse her selfe as his wyfe  
in that iourney oꝝ not (which wordes neuer  
thelesse, were vttered vnder such sort, that  
and if his motion were not well taken, all  
was spoken but in sport) whereunto she dis-  
semblpng as though she misundersode him,  
and



### Of Idlenesse.

(and the rather by some penituenes appea-  
rynge in her person, to perswade hym that  
she was not apt to receaue suche in-erterpe-  
ment) sayde, that in dede she had byn a wifo  
but as then was none, noz neuer wolde be.  
And thereupon takinge occasion to speke of  
her deade hulbande, semed as though she  
wolde shortly haue folowed hym for pure sor-  
rowe, which when this gentleman by good  
exhortaciō had somwhat appeled, & then af-  
ter a lytle pauise resited agayne the effect of  
his former wordes, promysyng that & yf she  
wolde shewe hym so muche gentlenesse, he  
wolde not onely beare her expense, but  
moreouer be glad to shewe her any kynde of  
pleasure that shulde apperteyne to the dew-  
ty of an hulbande for the tyme. Whereunto  
she beinge then in maner forced to make dy-  
recte aunswere, with sober countenance  
sayde. Alas howe haue I reioysed without  
cause, for wheras beinge a stranger in these  
partes, I thought it a comfozt to mere with  
company, the same to haue so cruell opinion  
of me, as to demaunde such question, is most  
to my discomfort, and therewithal protested  
helfore Godde that she neuer was woman of  
that conuersation, noz neuer wold be. Then  
the Gentleman leanyng to his selfe aduan-  
tage, swore that he durst depose the same in  
her

### The Image

her behalfe, and that he spake but in bozde  
to passe away the tyme, & syngge her noe  
to be offended therewith. Howe be it for al  
that, he intended not so to gyue ouer his en  
terpyse, but determined to prosecute the  
same by another meanes, and thereupon  
thought good to do as men commonly vse  
to do with sicke folkes, that (for lacke of  
appetite) when they are asked whether they  
wyl haue this meate or that made redy for  
them, they utterly refuse it, wheras bringe  
a cawdell or other good morsell, if without  
such questioninge it be made redy & brought  
them, the pleasaunt sauour or syght there  
of, wyl prouoke theyr stomakes to receaue  
it, therfore although bringe after this ma  
ner refused, yet he thought yf he myghte  
mete her in conuenient place with his thin  
ges in redynesse, he had good trust to be ac  
cepted, for the common prouerbe sayth, that  
women loue better to haue it, then to heare  
speke of it, and therupon determined by sum  
one pollycie or other to mete her warme a  
bed, and then to profer it without makinge  
of any question or demaunde. But syngge as  
the phisitions vse to gyue preparatyues be  
fore they minister the substance of theyr me  
dicine. Euen so bycause he wolde the better  
be alowed when he came, he entreated her  
before

### Of Idlenesse.

Before hande with all kynde of gentlenesse;  
for at her Inne she lacked not wyne, spyce,  
nor no other thyng that he might perceaue  
she couered to haue, nor no gellyes, or other  
confections that were good to make her coc-  
kythe hote or apt to receaue what he mente  
towards her, and by the way to helpe her  
bp and doloure, or to amende any thyng that  
was amysse about her, her owne seruante  
was not so attendaunt as he, so when he  
had by such expenses and diligēce, brought  
him selfe in some credite and fauour, then to  
gyue her some warnyng before hande, lesse  
she shulde abathe to much at his commynge.  
Amonge other pleasaunte talke, he shewed  
her howe he doubted that he was not well  
chysened, for as he sayde, he vled oftē-  
tymes to ryse out of his bedde in his slepe,  
and goynge aboute the house, shulde do he  
wyst not what hym selfe, and that when he  
were in suche case, he myght go whither so  
euer he wolde, for there was nother locke  
nor barre but wolde open ageynste hym, ex-  
hortynge her therfore, that and if he shulde  
happen to be vexed with that passion in her  
companye, and come into her chamber by  
myght, that she shulde not be afrayde therof,  
nor make none outcry, for he vled not to do  
any harme at all, At whiche woordes she  
laughed

### The Image

laughed and sayd, that and if he came therē  
he wolde so scorze hym with her rod, that  
he shulde repent his commynge. The nyght  
folowynge (beinge in the Sommer tyme) they  
came to Salisbury, where as this Gentle-  
man determined to set in bre the effecte of his  
deuyle, and after supper, perceauynge the  
Gentlewoman gone into the garden with  
the wyfe of the house, and her seruante in  
the stable, leauing her chamber doze abrode,  
he made his seruant pryue of his mynde,  
and bad him locke fast his chamber doze, as  
though he had byn gone to bedde, and then  
secretely gettyng into the Gentlewomans  
chamber, hyd hym selfe vnder her bedde, in-  
tendynge when she were a slepe, to get in by  
her. And so deuyls ynge in his mynde what  
a busye nyght he shulde haue, thought it  
good somewhat to refrethe hym selfe befoze  
hande, and so fell a slepe, durynge whiche  
tyme there came into the same Inn one of  
sy<sup>r</sup> Ogier Denkeyls seruantes, who when  
he was alyghred, perceauynge the doore a-  
brode, came streyght into the same chamber  
and leauynge his capcase there, locked the  
chamber doze, and toke the key with hym,  
whiche when the Chamberlayne perceaued,  
he made request to haue it ageyne, sayinge  
that he coulde not lye there, for that the  
some

### Of Idleness.

some was otherwyle appoynted, wherunto the tother answered that the same had alwayes wont to be his chamber, and there wolde he lye who so euer sayde nay, vnlesse he were fet out by the eares. In so muche that the Chamberleyn knowynge hym to be a common geste of the house, and a forward felowe, was loth much to stryue with hym, and therfore shewed the matter to the Gentlewoman (somewhat blamyng her seruance for leauynge the doze open) and despyred her to take another chamber, wherin she was sone intreated and dyd so. And when tyme came gate her to her bedde, as in lyke wyle the seruyng man to his, all this whyle the Gentleman lpyng vnder the bedde fast a slepe, and knewe nothyng of this alteration. About midnyght he awaked and harkenynge whether he coulde here any folke sterryng about the house, hard nothyng save one softly drawynge breathe within the bedde, which he supposed verely to be the Gentlewoman, wherewithal his hart tickled for ioye, which streyght wayes was turned to hygh displeasure. For as he came forth from vnder the bedde, thinkyng to brayn him selfe, he stumbled on the chamber potte, and made suche a noyse that the seruyng man sodenly awaked, and vnder a  
cough

### The Image.

rough sorte asked wh<sup>o</sup> was there, when the Gentleman contrary to his expectac<sup>o</sup>n hard a mans voyce, he was wonderfully abashed, but yet (coniecturing that it was the Gentlewoman's seruante abedde with his myster<sup>es</sup>) he boldely answered and sayde, it is I the good felowe that haue rydden so longe in your company (M<sup>rs</sup> I speke to you, although it be your seruante that asketh me the question) & nowe to shewe you the cause of my commynge hyther, the troth is, I suspected that ye were not so clere in your lyuyng, as you wolde seme to be accounted by your wordes, for the prose whercof I haue purposely watched you, and nowe do perceane what ye are. When the seruinger man harde this straunge aunswere, not knowing what the matter ment, he thoughte it was some raughty felowe that came to pycke his purse when he were a slepe, and that nowe perceauynge hym to be awaked, wolde counterfeyte hym selfe to be a foole, the rather to haue his misdeemeanor borne withall, and thereupon leapyng out of his bedde to his weapon, cryed out, theues, theues, and made such a noyse, that with in a whyle the goodman of the house, and all choother gesses, brake open the chamber doze, and with torches lyght and clubbes came



### Of Idlenesse.

came into theym and asked what was the matter, wherof beinge aduertised by the declaration of the scrupngeman (who mistakinge the purpose that was ment, made the act very heynous) Bogges body master Bachelor sayde the good man, lytle nede had you to vse your selfe so in this house, for by the holy mass I wolde rather haue layde all the plate in my house at gage for you, then that ye shulde lacke money if I had knowne it. Gramercy myne Hoste sayd the Gentleman, but to make you perceauie that I had no suche nede (the rather thereby to iudge that I ment no such thyng) ye shalbe prysed with my purse, and therewithall openinge the same, shewed forth in money and iewels, to the value of. xx. oz. xxx. pounce, and then sayde, syth the matter is come to this poynt, I wyll nowe out of hande shewpon the thyng that I thought not to speke of tyll that lent were come, that I shulde meete with my goosly father, and therupon (geuyng money to the residue of the company to depart, and drynke a gallon of wyne for theyr paynes) he toke the good man of the house and the scrupngeman asyde, and shewed them the whole circumstance of his purpose and intent, wherat when they had a whyle well laughed (exhortyng hvm to

A.i.      vse

### The Image.

hse moze circumspection in the matter at his  
next lodgyng) they departed, every man  
promysynge to kepe counsell. Howbeit ac-  
cordinge to the common proverbe, whiche  
sayeth that two maye chaunce to kepe coun-  
sell, but thre neuer. Even so this matter  
was so longe talked of in counsell from one  
to another, that befoze fyue of the clocke in  
the mornynge it came to the Gentlewomans  
eares, who although she wete nothyng in  
defaulte, was neuerthelesse wonderful soz-  
y to haue it reported that suche thyng was  
ment towarde her, accompyng that there  
might enter into the hearers therof some sus-  
pect of her euyl, which by any honest wo-  
man shulde be eschewed, in maner as muche  
as the very euyl it selfe. And therfore per-  
ceauynge that she coulde not remedye what  
was past, she thought yet to puenue what  
was to come, so that in the mornynge when  
this Gentleman sente to knowe when she  
wold ryde, she fayed her selfe sicke, and so  
forsoke his company, wherwith he was not  
a lyttle offended, and therupon imaginynge  
the cause of her stay, determynd to remaine  
all nyght at the next bayte, whiche was  
Shaftesbery, thinkynge that when she had  
once perceaued hym past and gone, it shulde  
not be longe oz she wold come after, and even

as

### Of Idlenesse.

As he thought so it chaunced, for in deed  
the same nyght he came to Shafresbery,  
wherof althoughe the Gentleman were won-  
derfull gladd, yet wolde he not be acknow-  
en to her vntyll the mornyng that he were  
a horsebacke, for feare lest he shulde sayne  
lyke excuse. to eschewe his companye as he  
had done before tyme. But in the mornyng  
as sone as he was gone, he came dallyng  
after, and bad her good morowe, wherwith  
the Gentlewoman being abashed, made an-  
swere and sayde, yea, are you there, had I  
knowne ye were no further passe, I wolde  
not haue byn thus farre forth, that wolde  
God I had neuer sene you: Why so mystres  
sayde the Gentleman, haue I shewed you  
any such unkyndenesse, that ye shulde haue  
cause thus to lothe my company: Nay said  
she ye haue shewed me none, but rather the  
contrary what so euer ye ment towarde me  
But as thintent of euerie acte deserueth the  
thanke or blame, so the pretence of your gen-  
lenesse tendinge to my flaunder (as now  
I knowe it byd) deserueth no thanks at  
all. As to shewe you what I meane by these  
wordes, it shall not nede, for I am sure ye  
knowe it well inough your selfe, and in like  
wise doth all the countrey. What rumours  
for shame haue ye caused to be made of me

### The Image

the other night in the towne behynde, there  
is no other talke amonge the people but of  
you and me, wherin although for my parte  
I dyd not ment any euill at all, yet am I  
assured by your meanes not to escape flaun-  
der, and therewithal gan piteously to wepe.  
When the Gentleman perceaued the mat-  
ter taken in so euill parte, he was ryght so-  
ry, but yet somewhat recomforted ageyne  
because she wepte (for commonly the syppe  
and displeasure of a woman wereth awaye  
with her teares, so that when thone is spent  
thother is past, and she then much moze trac-  
table to any frendely purpose then afore)  
whertupon after a lytle counterfeyte cog-  
nyng to be aduysed how to excuse him selfe,  
he thought beste, sythe his doynges in the  
matter were so apparaunt that it coulde not  
be denyed, that yet he wolde denye any  
euill of his parte mente thereby, or of hers  
receaued. And then sayde, I wylle mystres  
whercas ye saye that I haue caused you to  
to be flaundered, yf ye vnderstode anyght,  
there coulde neuer thinge chaunce better for  
the declaracion of your honesty, then for me  
to come into your chamber vnder such softe  
as I dyd, for wheras it myght be suspected  
that there was some misdemeaunour vsed be-  
twene vs (rydyng together as we haue  
done

### Of Idlenesse.

done) nowe that it is perceaued howe I  
durst not profer to come vnto your bed, but  
by stealth and vnknowne vnto you, the same  
sufficeth for your declaration in that be-  
halfe, for all men may iudge that and yf ye  
had byn pryue, or assentynge therunto, I  
wolde haue come in more boldely, so that in  
my mynde, there coulde neuer thynge haue  
happened better for your purpose, then for  
me to do as I dyd, and as to thynke that  
I entended you any euill by my commynge,  
by the blessed Godde I mente you no more  
harme, then to mine owne body, wherefore  
good mystres I pray you quyet your selfe,  
and be not thus offended without cause, no  
more harme then to your owne bodye sayde  
she: no, I thynke wel that, howebett what  
so euer ye wolde to your owne body, I am  
sure ye ment thereby none honesty towarde  
me. As I be saued sayde he, I ment you no  
dishonesty at all, and nowe to shewe you my  
mynde further, sythe the matter is come to  
this passe, on my sayth mistres I neuer in al  
my life knew what loue ment tyl time I met  
with you, why and do ye knowe now what  
it meaneth: sayde she, yes mystres yes, much  
more to my payne, then I haue as yet byn  
acknowne of sayde the Gentleman. For  
doubtlesse your comely person and discrete

### The Image

demeanour hath so drawn myne affection  
towardses you, that without your presence  
and fauour, it is not possible for my lyfe a:  
ny whyle to endure, and surely to shewe you  
therof in secrete, and somewhat to be sayd:  
fyed therin, was the onely cause that made  
me attempt the conuynge to your bed, and  
for no dishonesty at all as Godde shalbe my  
iudge. A well sayde she, now I perceauie it  
shalbe an easy thyng to proue you eyther a  
dissembler or a lyer, or els bothe. For and  
yf ye say ye loue me, and do not, then are ye  
a dissembler, and on thother syde, yf ye do  
loue me and wolde come to my bedde (as ye  
say your selfe, to be sayd in loue) the  
same doth imply as much as to dishonour me,  
and therfore to say ye ment me no dishonesty  
though the terme be rude ye are therin but a  
lyer. Alas mystres were it then your dysho:  
nesty that I shulde imbrase and kysse you  
abedde sayde the Gentleman, yea but ment  
you none other thyng saue onely so, sayde  
she? Why no by the blessed sacramente sayde  
he, and yf I dyd or do intende, otherwyle  
towardses you, God let me neuer light from  
this horse in my ryght wynges. So that in  
conclusion, with swerynge and starpyng that  
he mente her but all well, and partly in re:  
compence of the Gentlenesse and liberalitie  
shewed



Of Idenesse.

Metwed in that iorney towards her, she was contented the nextte nyght folowynge to leane her chamber doze open, and to gyue hym libertie with kysynge and embrasyng to do his hart an ease. This thyng so concluded, then brake they into other talke that all they folkes myght here to dyne as way suspiciō, & so with pleasant thoughtes passynge the daye, came the nextte nyght to Charde, where as she was lodged at thone ende of a longe Gallery, and he at the other, and in an other chamber, whiche stode betwene bothe, there lay another guest, whiche was bounde towards London, and came in a lytle befoze them (one master Jewegur a Gentleman of Devonshyre) who beinge of the other Gentlemans acquaintaunce, supped with hym in the Gentlewomans chamber, and after supper walked for recreation altogether into the garden, wheras after a lytle talke, this master Jewegur (beinge a suspicious and wply fellowe) perceaued by countenances that his companions coueted to haue some secrete talke, wherein to gyue thym scope vnder coloure to loke in a lytle boke that was in his bosome, he flaked his pace, but neuerthelesse had his eares attentyfe to theyr talke, and harde the Gentleman with a softe voyce saye, loke ye kepe

your promes for els ye fle me, and she to him  
 yes yes, but for Goddes sake loke ye come  
 secretly. yea thought the other: then I  
 knowe what ye meane. Well? though I be  
 not byddē to the banquet, yet may I chaunce  
 to haue some parte of the chere, and there-  
 upon repayrynge to them ageyne, fell into  
 sundry deuyles, yll at length a damosell of  
 the house came to the Gentlewoman, saying  
 her chamber was redy, and that yf it plea-  
 sed her to go to it, she wolde bynge her to  
 bedde, whereupon the Gentlewoman depar-  
 ted, but the Gentlemen remayned there as  
 longe as the day lyght wolde serue them to  
 walke, and when nyght came drew epyther  
 of them to his chamber, seuerally watching  
 of a conuenient tyme for one purpose, howe  
 beit the smel feast had aduantage of the  
 bydden gest (for by that names wyl I from  
 henceforth call them) bycause he stode so in  
 the way, that as longe as any steryng was  
 in his chamber, the other had no safe pas-  
 sage. At length when the smel feast percea-  
 ued the householde abedde, and al thinges  
 in quyetē, sauyng in the bydden gastes  
 chamber (for whom he was determined how  
 to proude) he vrayed hym selfe to his  
 bare spyte, and then takynge occasion to  
 loke on his swerde, founde faulte that the  
 same

### Of Idlenesse.

same was cankered, and then deuysynge a meete place for such a purpose (in the Gallery not farre from the hydden gesses chamber doze) he sette his seruaunt a worke with scourynge thereof, and in the meane tyme went hym selfe to the Gentlewomans chamber, whereas he founde the doze open, and was frendely interreyned, but yet whether he were sarisyfied with kyssinge and embrasyng as was promysed, or not, I some what doubt bicause it was not he that made the promesse. And surely the selfe loue of our vnhappy tyme is such (God amende it) that we shall seldome se any body forbear his owne commoditie, for the obseruynge of another mans promes, and ageyne yf he thynkynge hym to be the same that made the promes, shulde perceauie hym to profer further then was promysed, yet were we better to suffer in scilence, then to make any great noyse in the rescue, lest it shulde sounde in the eares of some (as in dede there lay strangers nere at hande) that not knowynge her simple meanynge, wolde thynke her in defaulte to suffer hym come so nere. But what so euer was done in the meane tyme, in conclusion, secretely as he came, so he departed, and she for her parte supposinge that she had honestly acquyted her selfe of her promes,

F. b.

Determin:

### The Image

determined for the residue of the nyght to  
take her rest, and therfore rose vp and soft-  
ly locked the doze after hym. So by this we  
mase se that it is not to be marueyled at,  
though some men labour sore, and can not  
thynne, and that some other doyng nothing  
at all waxeth tyeche, for oft tymes Fortune  
gyueth one man the fruyte of anothers tra-  
uell. When the bydden gesse to who had longe  
tyme walked vp and downe in his chamber,  
harkenynge here and there in abydynge his  
good houre, vnderstode all thynges hyshe  
and styll, and that there was no blynehe of  
candell lyght in any where apcarynge, then  
he thought tyme to set forwarde, and with  
tremblyng fote and hande, as though he his  
lyfe and death lay in balaunce, dyd euen so,  
but when he came to the Gentlewomans  
chamber, and founde her doze fast (thynking  
then that she ment onely to scozne hym) all  
his hotte loue or luste (whether of bothe I  
may best call it) was sodenely turned into  
rage and fury, so that with a swollen harte  
he returned backe agayne to his owne cham-  
ber, and there tumblyng on his bedde, pas-  
sed the residue of the nyght in great malyn-  
coly and displeasure. In the mornynge the  
smell feaste departed very early without tar-  
lynge of his leane (as commonly all men  
knowynge

Of Idlenesse.

knowynge them selues gilty, wyl be lothe  
to tary longe nere theyr faulte for doubte of  
espynge, but the hydden gest rode not tyl it  
was nere. viii. of the clocke, whome when  
he was a lytle in his way, the Gentlewo-  
man with a fayned frownyng countenance  
began to chalenge and sayde. A sy, I can  
you thanke, ye kepte well your promesse to  
nyght, a woman is well at ease to set her  
honesty in your handes vppon any othe (as  
who wolde say he hadde gone further then  
was promysed) What so euer thanke ye can  
me for keepynge of my promesse (sayde the  
Gentleman) I can you none at all for  
the breakinge of yours, and surely I am not  
contented with you, for ye bled me verie  
noughtely therein, (very noughtely sayd she)  
I pray you why so? Mary sayde the Gen-  
tleman, bycause ye made me watche a great  
parte of the nyght, and to proule aboute in  
the darke, promysynge to leaue your cham-  
ber doze abode and byd not so. Then wyfte  
she well that she had bin deceaued, and ser-  
chyng for a womans wyfte home to saue al  
thynges vpryght, sodenly founde one, and  
sayde: Why sy and were ye there in dede?  
and I ment to chalenge you bicause ye came  
not. Peca that was I by the good Lord (sayd  
the Gentleman) euen at mydnyght, and  
founde

### The Image.

founde it faste locked. Nowe by our blessed Lady sayde the Gentlewoman, then ye deceaued your selfe, for my doze was left open purposely for you, mary there was another doze faste by it whiche in dede was locked, and of lykelyhod for lacke of lyght ye toke the one for the other. Nowe on my fayth, sayde the Gentleman, it was euen so sure ynough, and thereupon laughynge at the matter, helde her excused, determynyng to vse hym selfe more circumspectely the next nyght folowynge, but in the meane tyme as the deuyll wolde, there came ageynst them a kynseman of the Gentlewomans (to gyde her thither as she was bounden) who conueyed her out of his company. And so by the crafty dealynge of the subtyll smell feaste, the bydden gest was disapoynted of his purpose, whiche by the perversenes of Fortune without any default in the woman, he could neuer recover afterwarde.

**T**he thyrde and last parte of the Epistle  
sente by Wallowyn Bachelor to  
Walter Wedlocke.  
The. xv. Chapter.

**B**y this experiment Walter we maye (amonge other thynges) perceaue thyngs  
bilitie



## Of Idlenesse.

billie of womens determinations, and how  
by discrete diligence and pollicie, they may  
be allured whereunto men lyst, be it good or  
euill, so that fortune be not viterly bent to  
the contrary, as it semeth she was ageynste  
the hydden gesses enterpryse. For in dede  
then there is no remedy, as before this, the  
wyfe in excusynge her selfe, when she was  
blamed for geuyng her husbände the lothe  
some lyuery, sayde that she coude nat do  
therwith, by reason that it was his fortune  
to haue it, and was thereby very well alow  
ed both of Justice Wynos hym selfe, and of  
all the whole courte. But Lorde God Wal  
ter howe rashe wytted am I become of late,  
for had I not chaunced to fall ageyne into  
like matter, I shuld haue ompted one of the  
chefeest thynges that concerneth the purpose  
I treatte vppon, whiche is to preserve the  
quyete betwene man and wyfe. For surely  
by ought that I can perceaue, the greatestte  
breache therof, is when she chaunceth to lye  
with some other man, whiche thyng the  
husbände in some countreys vseth to take  
wonderfull greuously, and yet let the mat  
ter rest there, as in dede it might wel inough  
yf he were discrete, and then were there no  
harmedone at all, for I haue knowen a  
number of men so vsed, and yet remayne as  
holosome

### The Image

holosome in theyr bodyes, as quyet in theyr myndes, and as sufficiently furnyshed to all purposes, as yf it had neuer so chaunced. What is it then thynke ye that causeth theire tozment and disemperaunce, may the know ledge therof: Why and whose defaulte I pray you is that, is it the wyues: Nay nay God wot, but his owne that prynceth to perzeane it, much lyke the mad man that seeketh for a knyfe to sle hym selfe. Oh vnhappye plage, that commeth onely by Sathan, for nature wolde haue it kepte pryue, and therfore prouoketh to haue it done in secreete, not God wolde not haue it disclosed, and therfore setteth in the peoples hartes neuer to knowe the husband therof, though it were so that al the rest of his partye shoulde happen to knowe it, and wyl he then hym selfe seke his owne harme, and make catnelle of game. Well and if he wyl nedes be so fool lysh, let hym languyshe with the frute therof, and I shewe all such as wyl mone him, it is me thinketh muche lyke the earpyng of a flye blowe (beinge a certeyne kynde of small wozmes that is ofren tymes founde in colde mutron, and such lyke meates, in the sommer tyme) wherof although a man eate a thousande (as commonly men do when they feede hungerly, and loke the not for them,  
pee

### Of Idlenesse.

yet doth it no harme at al. But and if afters  
wardes serchynge moze narrowly, he perceas  
ueth by them that are lesse, that in dede he  
hath eaten some. Then streyght wayes he  
casseth his gorge, and maketh ado as yf he  
were poysoned, which for trothe is not for  
any euill that is in the thyng, but commeth  
onely of a certayne squeymysenes and imper  
fection of the stomake. And surely Walter,  
even so is it in the other matter, yea and in  
all bothe cases to thynke that it be so, is as  
great displeasure and ynquietnesse of mind,  
as if it were so in dede, which declarerh the  
inbicillie of mans nature in that behalfe,  
and prouethe playnely that it is rather a  
vayne quarrel of the mynde grounded on no  
necessitie, then any suffiencie or effectuall  
cause of displeasure. But yet Walter for all  
that, yf ye be one of these that can not paci  
ently beare it (yf it so chaunced) then myne  
aduyce shalbe that ye neuer mystakke it, nor  
yet make meanes to knowe it, for then I  
dare warrante ye shal neuer be greued ther  
with. O; cast the wooll, as that ye chaunce  
to espye it your selfe vnloked for, yet then  
beware that in no wyse ye make any noyse  
or wordes therof, but kepe it as secreete from  
all other mens knowledg as ye can. For  
well wyll the wyrtie Dwyde what discommo  
dities

### The Image.

ditie growethe by the contrarpe, when he wrote the parable howe Vulcanus fynding his wyfe in bedde with Mars, transformed the stetes that they laye betwene, by a certeyne magyrcall meanes, into a cage oz net of wyer, and brought al the Gods to wonder at the, who neuerthelesse dyd but laugh hym to scorne for hys folly shewed therein, and esteemed his discretion the lesse euer after. Doubtlesse a worthy example for vs to eschewe the lyke mysdemeanoure, yf wee chaunce to come within the daunger therof, for it appereth that by so doyng, we get nothyng els but rebuke and shame. No Walter, not so much as to let your wife her selfe perceaue that ye do knowe it, for then eyther wyll she be abhominable bolde, seyng you contented to beare therewith. Or els must ye thinkyng to bryke her from it, make such a styre and busines, as all the worlde shall wonder at you bothe, and surely much better it is to dissemble at the matter for a tyme and abyde the commynge of age, who is the common amender of all suche faultes, to whiche effecte I wyl shewe you a notable experience that chaunced of late, and was thus. In the towne of Denborgh a certeine Smyth on a tyme came to the Prouest of the colledge there, and told him that Syr Henry Holmarghe

**Of Ibleneste.**

**Solmarthe** a priest of the same colledge res  
soyng muche to his house vnder pretence  
of cosynage, bled his wyfe ouer boldely.  
Whereunto the **Prionesse** answered, peace  
**John John**, for I dare say it is not so : or  
and yf it be, I promette thee I wyl cause  
hym to leane it. **May** master sayd the **Emper**  
I neyther doubte of the one nor hope of the  
other, but my desyre shal be, that your master  
wyppé for my pooze honestly, wyl cause him  
to vse hym selfe moze circumspectly therein  
then he hath done, for yesterdays as he and  
I sat together at brekefast, master **Saghers**  
man called me forth to chooe a horse, and  
when I came to the clinching of the nayles,  
I myst my pyncers (beinge in my hall wynd  
dowe) which when I came to ferch, I found  
my wife and him interlased vpon my bench,  
vnder suche an homely sorte, that on my  
sayth I was ashamed to loke on them, and  
thereupon wente backe ageyne before they  
stipped me, and borrowed a payre of pyncers  
of my neyghbour. And sy, aswell myghte  
there a stranger haue come in, and shamed  
me for euil, as by my trothe, yf I had byn  
certeyne where the pyncers hadde lyen, I  
wolde haue sent master **Saghers** man in for  
them. And sy, bycause the matter toucheth  
me so nere as it doth, I thynke it not bene

### The Image.

for me to speke vnto them therein my selfe,  
as well for doubte I shall not kepe due tempe-  
raunce in my wordes, or for sundrye other  
considerations, nor in dede I wolde not  
they shulde perceaue that I knowe so much  
therein as I do, and therefore good master  
Proneft make no notherwoyle vnto hym, but  
that ye suspect it of your selfe vpon repoyre  
at large, for that shall suffice to make hym  
more ware and circumspecte, whiche is as  
much as I loke for as yet. Nor for I tel is  
not you, but as it were vnder confession,  
trustynge that ye wyll kepe it secreete. If  
this rude man this Smyth that neuer redde  
Duyde, nor no other good aucthor, coulde  
after suche discrete sorte temper his cause,  
muche rather shulde they do so that are of  
more knowledge and better learned. And to  
you ye Venetian wyues, though ye chaunce  
to be narrowly taken, and charged therewith,  
yet be well ware ye neuer confesse it to the  
death, but speke and prate in your excuse  
to the vttermoste, as though ye were inno-  
cent in the matter. For what so euer the  
presumption or lykelynes thereof be, yet of  
this ye maye be certeyne, the very effecte re-  
flecth on so defuse and secreete a poynte, that  
in manner it is not possyble to be playnely  
known, without ye wyll be so madde as to  
condempne



### Of Idlenesse.

condempne your selues, and then farewell  
your good dayes all your lyfe after. Where-  
as by a lyttle floure standynge. at your de-  
fence, with a sober or circumspecte lyfe fo-  
lowynge, ye shall sone growe out of suspici-  
on, for this ye must vnderstande, men are  
easely perswaded to beleue the thyng, such  
as in theyr hart they couet it shulde be. And  
for your partes ye Cuppydyan knyghtes, ye  
must seme to delyght in such pastyme and re-  
creation, as ye shall perceaue the good man  
to do, whether it be huntynge, hawkynge,  
gamyng, or otherwyse, for so may ye best  
growe into familiaritie with hym, and co-  
lour your repayre to the house to be onely  
for his company. But then beware that your  
open lyght demeanour, disclose not your se-  
crete intent, as the wenche that pretended  
her often goynge to the Church to be all for  
 deuotion, but when it came to the purpose,  
her affection so muche ouerpaste her reason,  
that she set asyde the Sacre, and kyss the pa-  
ryshe Clarke, wherby her mynde that before  
tyme was prynciate to her selfe, was made  
common to the whole parryshe, therfore take  
hede that ye do not in lyk wyse, & when ye  
list to reward your mystris with some iewel  
or garment, loke ye make no gyft therof, but

B.ii.

lese

### The Image

lese it vnto her vpon some wager, made in  
the husbandes presence. And what so euer  
the vehemency or overboldnes of her affecti-  
on shal happē to be, yet be you wel ware that  
ye neyther disapoynte or interrupte hym at  
any such tyme, as he shal mynde to haue her  
attendaunt him selfe, for that is odible, and  
wylt sone engender suspicion, and besydes  
that in dede it is ageynst all good currelpe,  
wherein the people of this Realme haue him  
accompted to excede all other. And surely a  
chiefe part therof, is to suffer the good man  
(be he neuer so simple) to haue prehemynence  
and chiefe attendaunce of his owne wyfe,  
notwithstandynge her frendely familiaritie  
mente towardes any other, beinge of better  
abilitee or moze estimation. yet for my part  
not meanyng hereby to excyte or intyce you  
to any dissolute maners or incontinent trade  
of lyfe, but onely your selues bringe vnto  
thereunto, that then it may be so conueyed,  
as least rumour and inconuenience may ther  
of followe, in preseruyng the quyetnesse  
that I wythe to haue conynewed betwene  
man and wyfe, which I chiefly do for the  
reuerence I bere to the pleasaunt sacrament  
of matrymony, bicause my pooze father was  
sometyme accompted to be one of that band.  
No lyes, nor by saynte Mary I wyl not  
anowe

### Of Idleness.

Knowe that suche enterpryses of yours is  
lawful, for what so euer hath bin permitted  
vpon considerations in the former ages, or  
wrytten by the Philosophers or Poetes of  
that time, yet I remember wel we haue this  
samplier prouerbe, of auctoritie. (Newe  
Lordes, newe lawes) and therefore maye  
chaunce that by the commynge of Chyffe,  
such olde rytes and customes are abrogated  
and then is there peryll in the vse thereof.  
And also it semeth that the gyfte claymed by  
these wyues from Meomenius, maketh not  
so much for theyr purpose as they thynke it  
doth, for in dede it is none other, but onely  
to make them couet lybertie, for to say, do,  
and haue what they wyll, not expresseynge  
that the same shalbe lawfull for them, nor  
yet doth not dispence with chynquittie ther-  
of yf it be oherwyse.

And surely  
Daule to the contrarie saythe, that the  
husbande is the wyues hedde, and that she  
shulde holde her selfe to hym onely, and be  
confirmable to his wyll, and therfore aduise  
them at theyr owne peryll, for if they chose  
the wronge way, I wyll not bere the wyre  
thereof by abettyng them thereunto. And  
nowe Walter to conclude with you, wheras  
ye haue vniustly accused me, that I shulde  
dispyse maryage, I trust I haue bothe suffi-

**The Image of Idlenes.**

ciently declared my selfe therein, and also  
gyuen you ensample of a Chrysitian charitie,  
aswell in exhortynge you (notwithstanding  
your raylynge rage shewed towarde me)  
howe patiently to suffer the harme that can  
not be eschewed, as also in counsailynge  
howe the same may best be kept fro the know-  
ledge and wondrynge of the worlde,  
which for troth in such case is more  
payne and rebuke then the very  
synn it selfe, requyrynge no  
more at your handes for  
all my trauayle and  
good wyll  
herein,  
but from hence forth, to haue  
your good worde, and ys  
shalbe sure of  
myne.

**F I R S T.**



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**yard at the signe**  
**of the hedge-**  
**hogge.**